

RESURRECTION IS NOT JUST FOR PEOPLE ANYMORE:  
CREATING VIBRANT CHURCHES IN PLURALISTIC COMMUNITIES

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## ABSTRACT

### RESURRECTION IS NOT JUST FOR PEOPLE ANYMORE: CREATING VIBRANT CHURCHES IN PLURALISTIC COMMUNITIES

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This dissertation explores salient causes of congregational decline in and among mainline urban Protestant churches and various strategies and processes needed to initiate transformational pastoral leadership and congregational renewal in partnership.

Congregational decline is a significant issue for many denominations, the reasons for which are multitudinous. Among the two most noteworthy causes however is the clash between Protestantism's embrace of traditionalism in the form of historic modernism and the tension postmodern beliefs and viewpoints create for many people of faith; and secondly, congregational self-identity. Self-identity for our purposes refers to cognitive processes through which individuals and groups (congregations) perceive themselves and determine options for relating to others. It is a complex process that can either empower congregational renewal or detrimentally contribute to its demise. Turning around organizational decline requires leadership qualitatively different to transactional models. It requires transformational leaders, leaders who have first undergone a personal awakening to a vision of how reality can be and creatively empower others to transform their environment to match a collective vision. Incorporating solution-focused as opposed to problem-focused methodologies, this study illuminates the benefits of transformational leadership and organizational management tactics as far superior to traditional/modernist transactional approaches, especially in cases where likelihood of congregational demise is high due to decline.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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This book reflects the thoughts of many organizational experts, intellectuals, and practitioners I have come to know as a result of studying their work. I am particularly indebted to Carl Gustav Jung whose writings and musings have shaped my psychological development. His book *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* continues to wield its influence as to how I understand my life and purpose, in particular his insight into discovering one's life vision.

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opportunity to publically memorialize my gratitude for your friendship and fellowship, you are family! You have been a brother beyond words. And to my children, Adam, Candace, thanks for putting up with dad as he went back to school. I know it was not easy for you. Thanks for giving me room to grow. And to my wife Denise, who put up with my schedule, research time, and always showed such great tolerance so that I could devote myself to this book, thank you!

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## DEDICATION

To my wife,  
Denise,  
who is the love of my life.

And  
to my mother,  
Minnie Ree,  
who inspired me  
in more ways than she could know this side of heaven.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE SETTING: A REFLECTION OF THE PAST**

The Greenwood Baptist Church of Brooklyn, New York, Incorporated (Greenwood Baptist Church) sits in the heart of Park Slope, a bustling, gentrified neighborhood just southwest of Cobble Hill and Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn. Greenwood Baptist Church began as a small prayer meeting on January 11, 1856. The group was organized into a Sunday School by the Reverend Henry Bromley, a missionary and church planter, at the Mechanics Hall, then located on Third Avenue and Eighteenth Street. Two years later in 1858 the growing prayer group and Sunday School mission incorporated under the leadership of the Reverend Horace T. Love as The Greenwood Baptist Church of Brooklyn.<sup>1</sup>

Organizational efforts to establish Greenwood Baptist Church could not have happened without the support and sponsorship of The Baptist Temple Church of Brooklyn, NY. (formerly the First Baptist Church—Brooklyn’s oldest Baptist congregation—the historic Baptist Temple Church sold its building to another congregation and was renamed the New Baptist Temple sometime between 2005 and 2007,) and the Long Island Baptist Association, formerly the Hudson River Association.<sup>2</sup> Records indicate the “Sabbath School” provided religious education to 400 children and

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<sup>1</sup> George A. Cosper, “A History of the First One Hundred Years of the Greenwood Baptist Church of Brooklyn, New York” (DMin diss., The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, 1958), 1-5.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 35. The Long Island Baptist Association is the successor organization to the Hudson River Association of which Greenwood Baptist had been part until the mid-1860s.



youth, “with an average attendance of 150.”<sup>3</sup> The church, located in the Gowanus section of the borough, is named in deference of the Green-wood Cemetery.<sup>4</sup> Be that as it may, it has since provided worship services, missions and ministry for nearly one hundred fifty-three years. The needs of a rapidly growing congregation dictated facilities to accommodate its expanding ministry. In 1860, selection and the subsequent purchase of a plot of land near Fifteenth Street and Fourth Avenue committed the congregation to its first edifice. Despite the congregation’s enthusiasm, the reality of the nation’s great conflict, the Civil War, interrupted construction. Church records are virtually silent about the war, other than noting several patriotic young men from the congregation were among those who went to war. Even so, the church dedicated its first building for worship in April of 1863.<sup>5</sup> Construction for the congregation’s second edifice located at Fourth Avenue and Fifteenth Street began in the mid-1870s. Pastor of the historic congregation from 1955-1965, Reverend Dr. George Cosper’s, dissertation on the church’s robust history reveals the second edifice sustained serious damage from a storm sometime in the mid to late 1890s. The congregation grew to nearly 800 under the pastorate of Reverend A.G. Lawson and built its second edifice between 1874 and 1875. Determined to build a third edifice rather than repair the old, which had a severely compromised wall that threatened the stability of the entire edifice; and given the fact that the field of missions and economic opportunities were north of the current location; and given the growing numbers of Roman Catholics in the community, many began eyeing the Park Slope

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<sup>3</sup> Cosper, “Greenwood Baptist Church,” 4-5.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 18.

neighborhood as the church's new location.<sup>6</sup> Disagreement arose as to the new location. This, however, was not an option for others who opted to live and worship in the Gowanus-to-Bay Ridge sections of Brooklyn—areas that were not as urbanized and developed as downtown Brooklyn and Park Slope proper at that time. Park Slope served as the home to the Ansonia Clock factory, then largest clock factory in the world employing hundreds of workers.<sup>7</sup> Reverend Dr. Robert Hull, pastor between 1884 and 1906, wanted the congregation to be part of an economically viable, growing community, especially given the movement of many Greenwood Baptist Church members “up the hill” into Park Slope. In short order, the decision was made to enact a search for land on which to build. In 1898, the congregation procured a lot located at Seventh Avenue and Sixth Street designated by city planners as a church edifice site. The congregation's leaders arranged to worship in the basement of the All Saints Episcopal Church located on Seventh Avenue and Seventh Street until the completion of the new edifice. In that year the congregation moved from their Fourth Avenue building to worship at All Saints. That decision to move to Park Slope ultimately led to the congregation's fracture and subsequent decline, the second serious fall-off in its forty year history.<sup>8</sup> By the time of the new building's dedication in November 1901 the vast majority of the membership had gone their separate ways, a subject on which records fall eerily silent.

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<sup>6</sup> Cosper, “Greenwood Baptist Church,” 71-74.

<sup>7</sup> The Ansonia Clock Factory was founded by Anson Green Phelps' in 1850 as a subsidiary of his metal importing company Phelps, Dodge & Co., along with two clock makers from Bristol, CT, Theodore Terry and Franklin C. Andrews. This business later incorporated in New York and opened its massive factory operations in Park Slope, Brooklyn, NY in 1879. The Ansonia Clock Factory was a major business that employed hundreds of workers. A brief but fascinating article on the Ansonia Clock Factory can be found at <http://www.antiqueansoniaclocks.com/ansonia-clock-history.php> and in Chris DeSantis' *Clocks of New York: An Illustrated History*, McFarland, 2011.

<sup>8</sup> Cosper, 74-87.

Of the variegated threads running through the fabric of Greenwood's long history, one leitmotif bears mentioning: the congregation's demonstrated ability to mediate and adapt to change while holding steady to its faith commitment. George Cospers captures this spirit in quoting Pope Pius XII on Church adaptability: "[R]eligious organizations best serve the needs of the times when, on occasion, without giving up their own peculiar spirit, they adapt themselves to changing conditions."<sup>9</sup> Cospers goes on to cite instances of this adaptability.<sup>10</sup> Of greater consequence and note, however, has been the congregation's sustained level of social relevance to and in its immediate community, coupled with its exceptional organizational longevity. (However, it is only fair to note the congregation now faces one of the most severe and decisive moments of organizational decline in its 153 year history). In point of fact, approximately one hundred years ago (around the fifty-four year mark) Greenwood endured its most difficult moment. The congregation shrank to approximately one hundred regular worshippers. Between 1912 and 1916, conversation focused on merger, uniting 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Baptist Church of Park Slope (another small, struggling congregation) with Greenwood Baptist Church or what seemed as certain closure. Quick successions of pastoral leadership lead to the decision to call Reverend Dr. Francis O'Brien, someone who turned out to be a transformational leader (terminology mine). This call signaled an important shift in the life of the congregation, a shift that brought several decades of organizational stability, spiritual and numerical growth, with expanding ministries and missions.

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<sup>9</sup> Cospers, "Greenwood Baptist Church," 29.

<sup>10</sup> Cospers's history of Greenwood Baptist Church takes note of the congregation's willingness to relocate and change worship times as indicative of its overall adaptability.

So much has changed since Greenwood Baptist's inception in 1858: The Greenwood section of town (the section from which Green-wood Cemetery derives its name) no longer exists, having been consumed by Park Slope to the north and Sunset Park to the south. The country fought the Civil War which nearly brought the Union to its knees. America's slaves were emancipated. The City of Brooklyn, once a proud municipality in its own right, is now part of New York City, boasting a borough-wide population of some 2.5 million people.<sup>11</sup> And within the first forty years of its existence, the congregation had built three edifices, the present being the church's largest worship facility, having been erected between 1900 and 1901.<sup>12</sup> And the list of historical events continues.

In the span of 20 years, from 1912 to 1932, Greenwood's membership rolls swelled three-or four-fold; the church held multiple weekend worship services, offered various Bible studies groups; maintained fellowship groups inclusive of women, men, and couples; ran children ministries and participated in Baptist Youth activities; sponsored home grown missionaries to Japan, Haiti, and Africa; organized two satellite congregations: Memorial Baptist and Grace Baptist Churches of Brooklyn, New York; and boasted a professional choir to meet its public worship needs.<sup>13</sup> During these years of expansive growth and vitality, the congregation adeptly met the change needs of both congregation and community. However, the following 30 year period relay a different story. From roughly 1932-1962—the pre- and post-WWII years, Greenwood experienced

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<sup>11</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. New York Mayor Michael A. Bloomberg is contesting the legitimacy of the Census Department's most recent census conducted in 2010. The Bloomberg administration maintains that boroughs such as Brooklyn and Queens were significantly undercounted and that the population in Brooklyn, by New York City estimates, is closer to 2.6 million residents.

<sup>12</sup> Cosper, "Greenwood Baptist Church," 84-87.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 99-106.

significant fall away in membership due to the loss of longstanding families to other communities. Anecdotally, Greenwood Baptist's long-lived church historian shares that the membership exodus coincided with changes in Park Slope's demographics.<sup>14</sup> Most noticeably, the racial composition of the congregation changed during the 1950s, per the congregation's historian, Mrs. Marjorie Smith. Slowly at first but at a continuous pace, persons of color (initially of Caribbean heritage) joined. Greenwood Baptist was changing into a congregation of Euro-Americans, West Indians, South and Central Americans, and Southeast Asians, and remarkably, very few persons of African American descent. By 1965, the congregation had become a multiethnic community of faith with a strong emphasis on foreign missions.

### **Musings on the Present: How Did We Get Here?**

Cultivating a sophisticated appreciation of the past which informs and works to actualize the future is a motif common to many major world religions and cultures. For example, the Divine's pronouncements in Hebrew Scriptures of being the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob serve as vivid reminder to the ancient Israelites of the genesis of their identity and inimitable trajectory of their history (see, for example, Exod. 3:6, 16; Lev. 26:42; Deut. 1:8), such knowledge helps forge the loosely confederated tribes and clans of Hebrews into a powerful ancient nation.<sup>15</sup> On a more contemporary note, one is reminded of the oft misquoted line of George Santayana's, "Those who cannot remember

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<sup>14</sup> Mrs. Marjorie Smith was baptized at Greenwood Baptist in 1932 at the age of 10. She has lived her entire life in the community and has had the privilege of serving as the church's secretary for many decades. She also was the typist and reader for Reverend George Cosper's dissertation on the history of Greenwood Baptist Church. She is our oldest living active member and assistant Church Clerk.

<sup>15</sup> John Bright provides an insightful discourse into the development of the early Hebrew people into the Monarchy that was ancient Israel in his seminal work, *A History of Israel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000).

the past are condemned to repeat it.”<sup>16</sup> Knowing where one has been helps clarify into what future one must head, a future suffused by ever-increasing swells of change.

Demographically, Park Slope has undergone significant change in a short period of time. From the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to the early 1960s, Park Slope was largely home to families of Irish and Italian descent as they replaced the longtime Park Slope brownstone gentry.<sup>17</sup> The turbulent 1960s witness a marked transition of the community as it absorbed waves of Hispanic and black residents. Fortunately, a strong middle class ethic committed to family and community remained constant though the community suffered the debilitating effects of urban blight and crime. Former Park Slope residents such as Governor Hugh Carey and others contributed to the neighborhood’s viability. He, along with Senator Robert Kennedy, helped organize St. Augustine R.C. Church and St. John’s Episcopal Church’s efforts to acquire funding to renovate 17 run-down brownstones, which is thought to have sparked Park Slopes modern gentrification in 1966.<sup>18</sup> Today, Park Slope is the 21<sup>st</sup> century epitome of gentrification, although with expected issues here and there.<sup>19</sup> According to Philana Petterson, gentrification set in and steadily grew from the 1970s and 1980s “around the same time as the transformation of the Upper West

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<sup>16</sup> George Santayana, *Reason in Common Sense: The Life of Reason*, vol. 1 (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 1980).

<sup>17</sup> Philana Petterson, “How Yuppies Discovered Park Slope,” *The Real Deal Online*, May 1, 2005, <http://therealdeal.com/newyork/articles/looking-back-how-yuppies-discovered-park-slope> (accessed December 5, 2011).

<sup>18</sup> Liz Robbins, “Before Taking on Albany, Raising 14 Children in 1960s Brooklyn,” *New York Times Online*, 2011.

<sup>19</sup> Natalie O’Neil, “Seventh Avenue Is Filthy!” *Brooklyn Paper*, September 20, 2011, [http://www.brooklynpaper.com/stories/34/38/dtg\\_seventhavetrash\\_2011\\_09\\_23\\_bk.html](http://www.brooklynpaper.com/stories/34/38/dtg_seventhavetrash_2011_09_23_bk.html) (accessed December 5, 2011). O’Neil writes a scathing article concerning the build-up of uncollected trash along Park Slope’s main corridor, 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Fiscal year 2011 budget concerns were such that special funding via the Doe Fund, which allowed for the hiring of underemployed individuals to supplement Department of Sanitation clean-up of the business strip, was discontinued. Residents have been loudly complaining since the summer of 2011 about trash build up and unsanitary conditions.

Side and Soho.”<sup>20</sup> At any rate, the neighborhood consistently drew upscale hipsters—then known as yuppies (young urban professionals), Buppies (black urban professionals), and such to its large square footage/lower rent brownstones from upper Manhattan and similar environs. This process continued through the waning years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Thirteen years ago, the Greenwood Baptist Church extended a call to this author to serve as pastor. As part of (as it is referred to in the profession) “the candidating” process prior to that call, the pastoral relations committee provided a tour of the community touting life in Park Slope as a major selling point to relocating to New York City. Access to cultural venues and opportunities, a dizzying collection of restaurants, bistros, specialty shops, the natural beauty and tranquil atmosphere of Prospect Park; and a remarkable transportation system proved a tempting draw. Having young children at the time, we learned some of the borough’s best elementary and middles schools were part of the neighborhood, a point quite pertinent to any couple with young children. More than other Brooklyn communities, Park Slope *appeared* and certainly had the feel of an ethnically diverse place; far more than it does today. However, feel is deceptive—if not misleading. Take the following into account: Year 2000 Census data for zip code 11215 – Park Slope—proved that appearance false and not one borne out by the numbers.<sup>21</sup> People who describe themselves as white have and continue to be the largest group of residents in ‘the Slope’. That diverse “feel,” though not based in numbers (as some would say, ‘perception is reality’), still produced an atmosphere of ethnic plurality—making the neighborhood a highly desirable place to live and work—which it remains to this day.

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<sup>20</sup> Petterson, “How Yuppies Discovered Park Slope.”

<sup>21</sup> “Fact Sheet,” U.S. Census Bureau Fact Finder, [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?\\_lang=en](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en) (accessed December 5, 2011).

Gentrification is not a ‘yellow brick road’ to an Emerald kingdom; it has serious, debilitating effects particularly for those persons who cannot afford to live up to its economic requirements. At the turn of the new millennium, gentrification hit full wave throughout New York City, including Park Slope. Displacement of established families and individuals were increasingly common. Apparently real estate factors such as hyperinflation of rents forced out many elderly, working class families, and individuals.<sup>22</sup> Another second wave of displacement came in the form of housing stock speculation and development, accompanied by the ravenous acquisition of every available lot and green space. (Case in point: Park Slope’s main north/south thoroughfare, Fourth Avenue. Fourth Avenue stretches from Flatbush Avenue in downtown Brooklyn southward towards Sunset Park and Bay Ride communities. The redevelopment and commercialization of Fourth Avenue in the early 2000s benefited directly from the City of New York’s 2003 rezoning effort, which deregulated northern Fourth Avenue as a residential corridor; this relaxation of zoning restrictions spurred construction of condominiums, apartment buildings, conversion of unused building stock into restaurants and upscale shops designed to attract upscale hipsters and the like). Nearly every small green space and parking lot was acquired and developed into housing. From 2001 to 2005, rents soared as services and businesses jammed into every available store front and new building, all competing to meet the demands of affluent professionals and their families flooding into the community. Many congregations at that time felt overwhelmed by gentrification’s effects. Early on, Greenwood focused on helping members who were most at risk of displacement work with local housing advocacy community agencies in

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<sup>22</sup> From 1999 to 2001 Greenwood Baptist Church saw several longtime families forced to relocate to Long Island, Staten Island and New Jersey due to skyrocketing rents.



efforts to retain their housing. If retention efforts failed then focus turned to local networking with other community groups to help identify alternative living arrangements. This kind of attention to the needs of people affected by economic and political vicissitudes is a current hallmark of Greenwood's commitment to ministry. At the height of the recession, between 2008 and 2009, the Greenwood Baptist found itself in a relatively strong financial position. The congregation decided it could help both its members and broader community best by refocusing on the needs of the most at-risk in the congregation and community via the establishment of a micro bridge loan ministry. (As the economy worsened in the second half of 2008—freezing the credit market, debilitating the housing market, all the while finding more and more middleclass Americans into unemployment, Greenwood Baptist found itself in the unique position of being relatively cash strong. Having some discretionary financial resources at our disposal, the congregation mobilized to help those members affected by the downturn, as well as, people from the larger community. Using a significant sum of money donated and designated for the specific purpose of providing micro loans, Greenwood's diaconate established a bridge loan ministry to help with rents and other crucial living expenses. Also, they determined to increase their benevolence assistance to individuals using undesignated funds. Mission-based ministries were ratcheted up, providing increased clothing assistance through a newly created clothing exchange ministry where persons could donate canned and non-perishable goods in exchange for vintage clothing. This ministry proved especially beneficial during the fall as coats, other heavy and warm items, and baby clothes were in high demand. Collected canned goods were both donated

to the local food kitchen and distributed to persons in need who came directly to Greenwood for assistance.)

Between 2002 and 2003, Greenwood Baptist Church purchased a demographic study that indicated nearly 25,000 households fell within a half-mile radius of the church.<sup>23</sup> HomesPoint 2 (formerly Realtors) demographic data from 2007 indicates only a modest increase in overall population levels in zip code 11215 since the 2000 Census, going from 63,001 to 65,047.<sup>24</sup> Interestingly enough, this information does not provide a breakdown of numbers along lines of ethnicity. Census data from the year 2000 (most recent information available) indicates Park Slope's largest ethnic group at that time were whites (42,845), followed by Hispanics (16,765), blacks (5,097), and then Asians (3,463).<sup>25</sup> Based on anecdotal observation, I would assume that to roughly be the case today. Using that information, a community assessment was designed, which identified the population and issues Greenwood felt itself best suited to match. Between 2003 and 2005, several new mission initiatives were launched designed to connect with youth and artists.

### **A Reflection on Greenwood Baptist Church**

Greenwood Baptist Church's longstanding historian is Mrs. Marjorie Smith who turned ninety (90) this past January. The years have been extraordinarily kind to Mrs. Smith, who still walks wherever she wishes and enjoys a sharp mind and wit to match. Mrs. Smith recounts being baptized with two hundred other children in 1932 at ten years

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<sup>23</sup> "Demographic Assessment: 461 Sixth Street, Brooklyn, 11215," Outreach Marketing, 2002.

<sup>24</sup> "Park Slope," HomesPoint2, <http://homes.point2.com/Neighborhood/US/New-York/New-York-City/Brooklyn/Park-Slope-Demographics.aspx> (accessed December 5, 2011), formerly Realtors.com.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

of age by the Reverend Dr. Francis O'Brien who served Greenwood Baptist from 1916 to 1936.<sup>26</sup> Hers has been a life devoted to God and to Greenwood Baptist, serving as church secretary for many years and also in various leadership positions. She has lived through ten pastorates (including mine), and is a veritable storehouse of knowledge and information. According to Smith, Greenwood Baptist slowly began changing from an all-white congregation in the early to mid-1950s.<sup>27</sup> The change began with a family from Jamaica soon followed by other families of mostly Hispanic descent. From what she shares, the change was welcomed. By the mid to late-1960s Greenwood Baptist considered itself an integrated congregation. As members (people largely of Irish and German descent) relocated to Staten Island, New Jersey, Long Island, and points west and south, growing number of minorities joined the church.<sup>28</sup> This increase in minorities attending the church may correlate in some ways with larger demographic swings. At any rate, Greenwood Baptist faced a critical challenge (changing demographics) and successfully met it, turning the challenge into opportunity. By the early 1980s the congregation was a reflection of the larger community.

Given the level of political and social activism in Park Slope, communities-of-faith tend to serve as natural centers and conduits for community organizing and networking. Some congregations maintain long-term ecumenical and/or interfaith relationships that grew out of community activism in years past. Greenwood Baptist is

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<sup>26</sup> "Pillars of Faith, A Living History of Greenwood Baptist Church." This living history effort began in early 2011. The memories and stories of Greenwood Baptist's oldest members' are being collected and memorialized as part of a book detailing the last 80 years of Greenwood Baptist's history. The project's author is Ms. Elizabeth Kuster, former editor of Cosmo Girl magazine and a member of Greenwood Baptist Church.

<sup>27</sup> Marjorie Smith, Greenwood Baptist Church historian.

<sup>28</sup> Smith.

one of these congregations—to a limited degree. For most of the 1970s and 1980s Greenwood grew more conservative in its theology and independent in terms of its Baptist associational fellowship. It is fair to say that whatever community stature and influence it had in the late 1800s to mid-1900s eroded during the last waning decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Gentrification, and to a lesser degree, diversification transformed the neighborhood. Park Slope is a vibrant community of families, businesses, and artists. Those processes of change that sparked Park Slope resurgence in the last thirty years, ironically gave rise to Greenwood's isolationist attitude, doctrinal purist intransigence, ultra-conservative politics and general negative perception of the wider community and society. Greenwood, like many urban, mainline congregations facing accelerating decline, embraced an attitude of spiritual besiegement. Their insular, isolationist tendencies slowly choked off the congregation from the surrounding community; what the church interpreted as the broader community's religious indifference—if not open hostility—towards organized religious groups further affected and narrowed Greenwood's sense of self, their communal identity. Circling the wagons, as it were, the church's mission, by default, shifted to self-preservation mode: maintain the group and maintain the properties. Simultaneously, perceived societal hostility towards Christianity and its adherents formed quasi-apocalyptic proclivities—i.e., they being an embattled lot of believers interpreted current social malaise and dysfunction, growing religious apathy, the apostasy of the faithful with increasing disdain on the one hand; while, on the other hand, they embraced the notion of being among the few found faithful. Maintaining doctrinal purity, embracing conservatism, and eschewing any form of compromise served to further establish their sense of faithfulness and identity. Rather remarkably, under the

interim pastorate and forward-leaning leadership of Reverend George Herrick and his wife Gladys (1994-1998), Greenwood Baptist made a very conscientious decision to transform its thinking; find ways to reconnect with the surrounding community; jettison the attitude of besiegement driving it towards congregational death; and find ways to re-engage and embrace the community as a new opportunity for missions and growth.

### **Framing a New Reality: Modern Ministry in a Post-Postmodern World**

Change is hard to define because it is such a broad term. An attested meaning of the word as listed in the *American Heritage Dictionary* is “A transition from one state, condition, or phase to another.”<sup>29</sup> Given churches (like other institutions) favor static environments, anything that disrupt the status quo is resisted openly and sometimes surreptitiously combatted. Robert E. Quinn calls such environments, “don’t rock the boat cultures.”<sup>30</sup> This is a serious dysfunction in an age of postmodernism, a topic to which we will turn shortly. A healthier approach to change entails embracing it as a way of life. Rather than driving congregations towards isolationism or increasing degrees of doctrinal purity attempting to regain a sense of religious stability, it is better that change spurs congregations—houses of worship of all sorts—to explore, examine and embrace innovative approaches to doing ministry. What is more, today’s community complexities are such that unquestioning adherence to the methodologies of the past must be renegotiated and reconfigured to meet contemporary ministry demands and community needs.

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<sup>29</sup> *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, New College ed., s.v. “change.”

<sup>30</sup> Robert E. Quinn, *Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 18.

Greenwood has not been a community-focused church. Allow me to clarify: the congregation has a tremendous foreign *missions* history, supporting missionaries and efforts around the world and, to a lesser degree, in the Southwest United States.

Greenwood Baptist Church's surrounding community has not been the recipient of such energy, finances, and attention since the early years of its inception, however. The church has experienced diversity but it has grown insular nonetheless. (Though unsubstantiated, experience leads me to believe that Greenwood's historic elevated membership turn-over rate in some way correlates to its myopic view of mission and community relationship). Further, community-minded individuals find this stance frustrating and narrow and soon leave to find congregations with a more balanced philosophy of ministry. Ecumenical and interfaith involvement hardly ever ventured beyond the immediate community-wide events, annual days, or special commemorations of varying sorts. Moving beyond the comfort zone of what is congregationally familiar to becoming full participating members of a larger civic group is one of the present, great challenges for our congregation.

Attendant to this is the significant challenge is the opportunity of building vital relationships in a highly dynamic and pluralistic community. Park Slope is home to Catholic congregations; synagogues of various traditions; Baptist churches; Dutch Reformed; Greek Orthodox; Presbyterian outreaches; Methodists; Episcopal congregations; Assemblies of God; Pentecostals of various stripes; Seventh Day Adventists; a Sikh community; and Brooklyn Society for Ethical Community. Given the faith richness of the community and opportunities for creative collaboration, it is surprising current levels of ecumenical and interfaith cooperation in Park Slope are anemic at best. Congregations are more apt to invest time and resources into local

projects of their own choosing. As noted above, Greenwood Baptist has historically done so spending considerable resources in recent years in various mission efforts such as helping to build a hospital in Cap Haitian, Haiti; funding a church in Japan; helping provide for a medical missionary in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and a HIV/AIDS ministry for children in South Africa.

### **Postmodernism and Declining Urban Congregations**

Greenwood Baptist's experience of change is not unique, however. More important than merely citing the fact that the world has changed is naming that change, describing what it is and how this current era of change differs from that which the congregation has faced in decades past. What some may identify as changing demographics (diversifying community), gentrification (population displacement), economic forces, growing disregard for traditional authoritative touch points and the like, are compositional aspects of a greater, far reaching phenomenon, a paradigm shift not experienced since the birth of the modern age. Stanley Grenz calls it the "new reality".<sup>31</sup> By name this "new reality" is Postmodernism.

One may rightly pose the question, "In what ways does this change, this 'new reality,' relate to congregational decline and transforming those congregations into vibrant, resurgent communities-of-faith?" I believe understanding the terrain of the new paradigm lies at the heart of a worthwhile strategic design crafted to reinvigorate dying congregations and position them to meet the demands and expectations of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Persons such as Ed Stetzer have written extensively about Postmodernism's effects on the religious sector, such as the yawning number of youth who are completely

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<sup>31</sup> Stanley J. Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996).

“unchurched.”<sup>32</sup> As Grenz describes, postmodernism has created a shift away from empiricism to a less stringent view of the world:

But we are moving into a new context. The Western world—from pop culture to academia—is jettisoning the Enlightenment principles that formed the foundation for modernity...In this new context, Foucault’s suspicion of every “present order,” Derrida’s questioning of reason by reason, and Roty’s thorough going pragmatism are common parlance, even for those who have never heard the names of these philosophical gurus of postmodern culture.<sup>33</sup>

Grenz further describes this “postmodern ethos” as a “radical skepticism,” which is characterized utilizing the following descriptors:

- rejection of the immediate past
- rejection of the metanarrative
- rejection of objective truth
- rejection of correspondence theory of truth
- “despair concerning the quest to discover all-encompassing truth...there is no unifying whole” of reality.”
- “all human interpretations – including the Christian worldview – are equally valid because”
- “loss of a center.”<sup>34</sup>

These characteristics and factors, in part, constitute the contours of the new reality. Our argument is that every congregational leader must first become aware of the nature of change (naming it) then become adept and skillful at navigating and exploiting it both personally and community-wide. Change is not necessarily “bad or good.” It simply is. The distance and difference between modernism and postmodernism are not

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<sup>32</sup> See, for example Ed Stetzer, Richie Stanley, and Jason Hayes, *Lost and Found: The Younger Unchurched and the Churches that Reach Them* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2009).

<sup>33</sup> Grenz, *Primer on Postmodernism*, 161, 162.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 162-204.



fully irreconcilable. That is to say, one must discover how to “build the bridge as you walk on it,” to borrow a phrase (see Robert E. Quinn’s book *Building the Bridge as You Walk On It*); or understanding where one presently stands in relation to change and discovering the skills and tools needed to creatively move forward.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **BIBLICAL/THEOLOGICAL BASIS: TRANSFORMING LEADERS CHANGING COMMUNITIES OF FAITH**

“We have to believe in the power of imagination because it is all we have, and ours is stronger than theirs.” Carlos Reuda

This chapter examines the biblical and theological foundations that undergird an understanding of transformational leadership, its process and distinctives, and how transformational leaders theologically and practically impact the worldview of their communities-of-faith. This examination begins by stating its operating assumption: churches ought to be transformative communities and those who lead them should be transformational individuals. The use of the verbs *ought* and *should* are purposefully intended to convey obligatory expectation and mood as these sensibilities accord with Jesus Christ’s purpose for establishing the Church. Jesus’s intentionality is communicated phenomenologically by seeing to its continuance; e.g., Peter’s appointment as its caretaker - “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18 RSV). And later, after the resurrection event, Jesus confronts Peter and instructs him to “feed my lambs” (John 21:15-17 RSV). Jesus’s desire that the church have perpetual transformative impact on the world is substantiated in the Church’s Great Commission, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the close of the age.” (Matt. 28:19-20 RSV)

Highlighting again the very purpose of the Church is to engage people in a transformative way. And as the Apostle Paul picks up in Colossians 1:18, “He is the head of the body, church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent.” So, it is incumbent on the Church to seek to exercise Christ’s expectations.

### **Earlier Evidence of Transformational Expectations of God’s People**

Among the earliest instances of community transformation in the Bible is that of the ancient Israelites, although the full extent of that transformation in light of continuing tension between the push of dominate Egyptian cultural narrative upon their mindset and the pull of the Sinai Covenantal vision upon their imaginations is debatable.<sup>35</sup> What stands supreme in their history is the Late Bronze Age emancipation event commensurate with the Egyptian Eighteenth Dynasty (ca. 1550-1200) - the Exodus - and the ensuing transformational exemplar; the Sinai Covenant.<sup>36</sup>

In his *A History of Israel*, John Bright comments on the fact that little “extra-Biblical” evidence exists regarding the events surrounding Israel’s departure from Egypt.<sup>37</sup> However, the Biblical record itself is quite replete concerning this pivotal event (see Exodus 5-20 for example). In fact, the Exodus linked with the giving of the Decalogue on Mt. Sinai represent the “center of faith” for Judaism to this day; also reflected in Exodus 15:1-18; 20; and faith affirmations as found in Deuteronomy 6:20-25

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<sup>35</sup> Walter Brueggemann discusses in detail this tension between what he coins as the “royal consciousness” and the “alternative community of Moses” in *The Prophetic Imagination*, chapters 1 and 2. The “royal consciousness” represents the dominant social and political reality that permeates all sectors of life and thought. Conversely, the invitation of YHWH conveyed through Moses is of a world and way of life as it could be that far outstrips the negating and deleterious effects of the dominant culture. Thus, a tension arises between which the ancient Israelites vacillate for centuries, indeed, for the extent of their history.

<sup>36</sup> John Bright, *A History of Israel*, 3d ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1981), 107-108.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

and 26:5-10.<sup>38</sup> Of immediate relevance, however, are two particular facets of this narrative: the process of personal transformation Moses underwent and the eventual coalescence of tribal allegiances<sup>39</sup> into a single nation with a transformative conception of community and faith (Deut. 6:4, 5-25).

### **From Tender of Sheep to Great Law-Giver**

When considered against the long standing facts of his plight and eventual place in life, Moses's transformation from tender of flocks to liberator, law-giver and prophet is nothing less than spectacular. That portion of Exodus that covers the circumstances surrounding his birth, rearing, transgression and exile transpires in two short chapters. Having spent one-third of his life inundated by the allure and rhetoric of the dominant culture, something within Moses nonetheless stirs as he witnessed the harsh treatment of another Hebrew. One can imagine that his response is that of righteous indignation; however the hold and influence of that violently oppressive milieu into which he was born, Egypt's Eighteenth Dynasty, Moses had internalized well messages of the day. His recourse was to violence: meet violence with greater, overwhelming violence. Moses's action resulted in his exile as the "royal conscious" of his day did not abide rebellion.

Tending flocks and rearing a family comprised the second movement of Moses's life. One may speculate that many life skills and lessons learned in Egypt had little relevance in the land of Midian (cf. Exod. 18:1). Pastoral care and attention, minding the

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<sup>38</sup> Bright, *A History of Israel*, 122.

<sup>39</sup> See Bright chapters 3 and 4 on his treatment of the development of tribal allegiances into the nation of Israel.

interests of his father-in-law and securing the well-being of the ones whom Jethro<sup>40</sup> loved became Moses's purpose in life, which ironically foreshadowed the larger purpose that epitomized his life's work. Moses' encounter with the burning bush in Exodus 3 represented *the* crisis point and beginning of his life's third movement. The presence of change was as a flash of flame dancing on the horizon; enough to pique interest and to stir anxiety. For Moses, change (as we shall see in numerous occasions in our biblical and theological examination, YHWH is the cause – no pun intended – of change) came from without. The burning bush represented the presence and expanse of holiness (Exod. 3:5) and also the pressing urgency of change.<sup>41</sup> Moses's transformative moment was not without its challenges and personal low points, for out of the give-and-take of bartering with YHWH, even as YHWH reframed Moses's worldview, he was nonetheless overwhelmed by the prospective enormity of the emancipation venture as evidenced by his responses: "Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people out of Egypt?" and "If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they will ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what should I tell them?" (Exod. 3:11; 13 NLT). That's the penultimate challenge of transformative leadership! How best to articulate the vision and on whose authority does vision rest? The larger story here is that vision communication is shared among and by transformative leaders. The power of that vision authorizes itself. The presumption being that YHWH is the *One* who causes action and builds momentum. A relationship is created around causation and communication that feeds upon itself.

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<sup>40</sup> Harris and Platzner present information on the Jethro/Ruel source debate, where the Elohist tradition refers to Jethro and the Yahwist tradition favors Ruel in the text. See Harris and Platzner, *The Old Testament: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2008), 92-93.

<sup>41</sup> John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 1996), 8.

Moses continued his effort to maintain the status quo, resorting to personal minimization and vitiation: “What if they won’t believe me or listen to me? What if they say, ‘The Lord never appeared to you’?” (Exod. 4:1 NLT); and finally, “Lord, please! Send someone else” (Exod. 4:13b NLT). It was not until the point of practicality that Moses began the critical shift towards transformation. His final protest was that eloquence – public speaking – eluded him. Conceivably, spending so many years away, the demands and stresses of urbane life had affected both will and confidence. Transformation, personal and corporate - is driven by vision. Yet vision must be grounded by some practicable application and support. That practicality came in the form of progressive signs of transformative competency; that is, the grand vision yielded a series of undeniable results that authorized the vision and its communicators. Transformation starts with simple acts that lead to extraordinary outcomes.

### **The Transformation of the Covenant Community**

Our examination above establishes Moses’s transformation experience and that, presumably, of his brother Aaron. Their personal commitment to YHWH’s emancipation vision necessarily precedes that of their fellow Israelites. Yet the coalescence of the many tribes into a single-minded entity called the Israel did not transpire all at once. Rather, the biblical narrative of their ascension towards nationhood entailed an extended process accented by fits and starts that took decades to effectuate, the full tracing of which extends far beyond the parameter of this examination. For our purposes, it is more valuable to focus on that pivotal moment that represents the insertion of transformation in the form of the Sinai covenant and its impact the fledgling nation of Israel.

## The Ten Words on Mt. Sinai

Israel's response to the initial vision of emancipation can be described as a brew of incredulity and hope. Yet Moses's communication and the subsequent authorization of YHWH's intent and vision created space for the eventuality of the exodus event and the looming possibility for forming a transformational community as evidenced in YHWH's statement: "And you will be my kingdom of priests, my holy nation" (Exod. 19:61 NLT). For Pharaoh, however, the idea of slaves celebrating in the desert instead of building cities and fortifying infrastructure must have been infuriating. Egyptian gods had served to validate Egypt's way of life, a static way of life in which YHWH had had no say or sway. YHWH's new pronouncement – "Let my people go" – not only attacked Pharaoh's total dominance and that of Egypt, its intrusiveness presented an alternative view of life that quickened the hearts and imagination of the Hebrews. That said, sometime perhaps in the thirteenth-century Israel claimed its freedom and journeyed towards the Sinai Peninsula.<sup>42</sup> Though the exact location of Mt. Sinai remains hotly contested,<sup>43</sup> some mountainous location became the focal point of their early wondering and the stage upon which the prospect for transformation became reality.

John Tullock and Mark McEntire equate the giving of the Ten Words (a common designation in Judaism based on the Hebrew *debar*) on Mt. Sinai to Israel's "Constitutional Convention."<sup>44</sup> Their point is based largely on preliminary conditions set forth by YHWH for Israel to enter into covenant relationship; i.e., establishment of relational

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<sup>42</sup> Bright, *A History of Israel*, 123.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 123-128.

<sup>44</sup> John H. Tullock and Mark McEntire, *The Old Testament Story*, 7th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2006), 78.

standards, proximity boundaries, conditions of obedience, etc., which set the stage for ratification, the dramatic giving of the Ten Words at the foot of the mountain.<sup>45</sup> Tullock and McEntire link the Ten Words' similarity – though making due note of their uniqueness - to other ancient Near East legal code traditions. The structure of the Ten Words closely resembles suzerain treaties, a legally binding agreement where a vassal pledges allegiance and fidelity to a king, such treaties consisted of:

- 1) A preamble
- 2) An account of historical circumstances leading to the treaty
- 3) Stipulations and requirements
- 4) Arrangements for public reading of the text and its safekeeping in a shrine
- 5) A list of divine witnesses to the treaty
- 6) A vivid catalogue of blessings for abiding by its terms and curses for violating them.<sup>46</sup>

Gordon Wenham in his book, *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Pentateuch*, presents a description of the Ten Word's salient ideas: "...First, that the covenant is based on God's saving initiative...Second, they are expected to respond in obedience by keeping the covenant law...Third, this obedience will be rewarded by ever greater intimacy with God...Fourth, this intimate relationship will benefit all the peoples of the world, as Israel will function as a priest to all nations."<sup>47</sup> Immediately following the Ten Words is a section scholars refer to as the 'Covenant Code' (Exod. 20:22-

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<sup>45</sup> Tullock and McEntire, *The Old Testament Story*, 78.

<sup>46</sup> Stephen L. Harris and Robert L. Platzner, *The Old Testament: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008), 164-165.

<sup>47</sup> Gordon J. Wenham, *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 68.



23:33).<sup>48</sup> The Covenant Code anticipates Israel's entry into Canaan and adds practicality to the Ten Words.<sup>49</sup> Yet, the Ten Words and subsequent Covenant Code amount to much more than pure legality. They herald the inauguration of a new concept of community, a covenant community.

### **A People Transformed**

The confluence of events in Exodus prefigures several significant theological shifts,<sup>50</sup> not the least of which is YHWH as "a personal God who demanded personal loyalty."<sup>51</sup> This personal God also desired a transformed community exemplified in the Covenant Community ideal. Paul D. Hanson's thoughts concerning this are presented in full below.

With the birth of this people, a new order of life and a new notion of community were born. The implications for human life and life in community found within the exodus experience were profound, as can be seen by contrasting the old gods with the new God. In the deliverance from Egyptian slavery, Israel encountered a God whose nature and whose corresponding plan for reality stood in diametric opposition to the gods of the Pharaoh. The latter were the divine sponsors of the ruling class, similar to the high gods of the Mesopotamian city-states, alongside of which arose belief in the "personal god," who took a parental interest in human beings. In the exodus was revealed the heart of a God whose sovereignty spanned the heavens, but who at the same time embraced the cause of the most humble and oppressed members of society, a God neither impressed with

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<sup>48</sup> Tullock and McEntire, *The Old Testament Story*, 79-87.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 82-83.

<sup>50</sup> Walther Eichrodt, "The Nature of the Covenant God," in *The Old Testament Library*, vol. 1 of *Theology of the Old Testament*, trans. J. A. Baker (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1967), 206-282. Walter Eichrodt traces Israel's theological development and catalogues the ways in which that development affected communal life, understanding and outlook. Of particular note is his treatment on "The Nature of the Covenant God" spanning chapters six and seven. YHWH's personal, relational nature is the ground out of which a viable covenant relationship becomes appropriable and the uniqueness of Judaism grows.

<sup>51</sup> Lawrence Boadt, *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 175-176.

nor influenced by the pedigrees, proud claims, or pompous displays of power, erudition, and wealth of kings and other earthly potentates.”<sup>52</sup>

The covenant community was idealistically visionary yet realistic in its goals. By this, I mean God’s communal vision marked by holiness, equity, and intercessory responsibility (nation of priests) was tempered by the fact that the people of Israel were “living in a world in which slavery and the exploitation of aliens were unquestioned parts of the economic system...were vulnerable to...human passions that foster oppression and inequality... [therefore]...recognizing the need for communal norms” was a matter of pure survival.<sup>53</sup> YHWH’s covenant ideal sought transformation of cultic values – which had been based on the Egyptian pantheon - into a faith community bound by mutual accountability and care of the other. However, YHWH’s transformational ideal seems never to have been fully met as “Israel would compromise or deny its own essential being as a people called by God,” according to Hanson.<sup>54</sup>

One might wonder whether YHWH’s intent to establish Israel as transformational community failed. Given the historical evidence and the vibrant life of Judaism around the world, I believe the resounding response is no; it did not fail. In fact, the opposite is true. Granted, the covenant ideal as fully articulated over the expanse of the Torah may not have been fully realized, significant transformation did occur: Those who once served Egypt in bondage experienced (a) astonishing events; (b) reconsidered long held values; (c) assented to a common vision; and (d) shared a memorable journey into an unfamiliar frontier – all significant factors which served to congeal loosely associated tribes into a

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<sup>52</sup> Paul D. Hanson, *The People Called: The Growth of Community in the Bible* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1988), 21-22.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 23.

thriving covenant community. In time, that covenant community, closely identified with the Sinai/Horeb experience, coalesced into the nation of Israel-Judah. Moreover, Moses's story of personal change must be held in tandem with Israel's transformation. Moses's experience preceded that of the people but the people could not have transformed without the vision and communicated and lived by Moses and his leadership cadre. Indeed, transformational leaders do affect their communities, and transformed communities become the seedbed for extraordinary accomplishments.

### **Models of Leadership**

Stetzer and Rainer observe that “[t]ransformation is at the heart of God’s mission to humanity. He delights in moving us from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light [*sic*].”<sup>55</sup> Indeed, Israel’s exodus experience is prime example of their assertion. Yet Israel’s transformation hinged on the quality and character of its leader par excellence, Moses.

Burns in his landmark book, *Leadership*, lists sundry shades of leaders from “...rulers...power wielders...despots...[to]...tyrants.”<sup>56</sup> He argues – from which we shall shortly extrapolate – that there exists a chasm between what he calls “rulership” and leadership (see Burns’s Prologue). We may comfortably infer that what ancient Israel experienced at the hand of Egypt was rulership in the extreme, tyranny. That is power wielded in order to subjugate, suppress, dominate, dispirit and control. According to the rules of social learning (see Chapter 4, Self-Identity Theory), Moses’s exposure to a violence-based model of leadership must have informed his conceptualization of power,

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<sup>55</sup> Stetzer and Rainer, *Lost and Found*, 3.

<sup>56</sup> James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Harper Perennial, 1982), 2.

its use and authority. Moses's very act of aggression in which he took another's life, and for which he was ultimately exiled, demonstrates the degree to which that social milieu had affected him. Years of exile, however, prepared space for a paradigm shift that tempered his rulership impulses. And the burning bush encounter effectuated a change process that directed the course, quality and shape of his leadership – transformational leader.

### **Transformational Leaders**

Moses is understood as the great leader of his people. However, leader does not fully convey the qualities and character inherent in the man. Jewish and Christian traditions refer to him as the great מֹשֶׁה (lawgiver), but that designation is not made of him scripturally.<sup>57</sup> Depending on the English translation, מֹשֶׁה appears four to seven times usually carrying the meaning of “scepter,” which identified one as holding or having authority.<sup>58</sup> Numbers 21:18 states, “The well which the princes dug, which the leaders of the people opened with their scepters and their staffs...” (Num. 21:18 NET). The KJV translates מֹשֶׁה as *lawgiver* as in one who is member of a leadership group. “The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, *by the direction of the lawgiver*, with their staves” (Num. 21:18 KJV). Obviously both renderings of מֹשֶׁה convey separate meaning yet present a plausible and cohesive expression of the idea.

Another Hebrew Scriptural occurrence of מֹשֶׁה attesting the implication of lawgiver is found in Isaiah 33. Here it is used in terms of one who governs, citing YHWH as The

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<sup>57</sup> *Holman Bible Dictionary*, s.v. “lawgiver,” <http://www.studylight.org/dic/hbd/view.cgi?w=lawgiver> (accessed February 25, 2013).

<sup>58</sup> *Holman Bible Dictionary*, s.v. “scepter,” <http://www.studylight.org/dic/hbd/view.cgi?w=scepter> (accessed February 25, 2013).

One who governs/rules. The New English Translation opts for the descriptor *commander* in this instance: “For the LORD, our ruler, the LORD, our commander, the LORD, our king, he will deliver us” (Isa. 33:22 NET). Clearly, YHWH is recognized as The One who rules Israel though others are entrusted with authority on behalf of the people. Moses’s role was as conveyor and interpreter of YHWH’s pronouncements to ancient Israel.

Moses referred to himself as a נביא (prophet) in Deuteronomy 18:15, an appellation that YHWH used in reference to Moses in Numbers 12:6-7, though to contrast the kind and quality of relationship which existed between YHWH and Moses to that of Moses’s siblings, Aaron and Miriam. נביא appears 242 times throughout the Hebrew Scriptures in the context of a spokesman or speaker. Clearly a role Moses carried out and which YHWH corroborated. Exodus 33 reveals, “The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, the way a person speaks to a friend...” (Exod. 33:11 NET). Moses was one who spoke for and implemented YHWH’s word to the people. Yet those actions do not encompass the extent of his transformational leadership. To gain greater understanding and appreciation for this kind of leadership we must turn to contemporary sources and studies.

### **Transformational Leadership Described**

James MacGregor Burns advances the theoretical grounding for transformational leadership his 1978 classic of the same name. First, he establishes the grounds for present day leadership dysfunctionality:

“The crisis of leadership today is the mediocrity or irresponsibility of so many of the men and women in power...The fundamental crisis underlying mediocrity is intellectual. If we know all too much about our leaders, we know far too little about *leadership*. We fail to grasp the

essence of leadership that is relevant to the modern age and hence we cannot agree even on the standards by which to measure, recruit, and reject it.<sup>59</sup>

Second, Burns observes the unnecessary and false dichotomy between leadership and followership, a weakness of “the literature on leadership and the literature on followership.”<sup>60</sup> Burns argues that it is this system separation (leadership-followership) which gives rise to the notion that “leaders act as agents of their followers.”<sup>61</sup> Whereas one may find truth in that view of leadership in a representative democracy; such sentiment can prove deleterious for organizations secular and religious. As transformational leadership’s functional complexity is intricate and comprehensive, Burns description of it expands to include its essential components. At core, the transformational leader is one who:

...exploits an existing need or demand of a potential follower. But, beyond that, the transforming leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower. The result of transforming leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents.<sup>62</sup>

As Burns goes onto explain, transforming leaders change “entire systems,” while helping followers fulfill higher needs, something similar of which Bernard Bass and Ronald Riggio speak in *Transforming Leadership*. Bass and Riggio point to transforming leaders’ ability to grow and develop their followers, among other potent traits. They note, “...transformational leaders focus on developing and raising awareness of their followers

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<sup>59</sup> Burns, *Leadership*, 1.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 4.

about the importance of satisfying higher order growth needs...They attempt to understand the needs of followers and then develop them to higher levels.”<sup>63</sup> These higher needs entail cultivation of ways of thinking and being “...so comprehensive and pervasive, and perhaps accelerated, that new cultures and value systems take the place of the old.”<sup>64</sup> In short, transforming leaders envision new realities, communicate and promote new paradigms, fashion the development of new operational cultures, while proving moral model that embodies a projected new reality. Transformational leaders foster environments that empower others. Not surprisingly, Bass, Riggio and Burns allude to increases in followers’ psychosocial qualities and behaviors such as enhanced feelings of self-esteem, personal agency, and higher evidences of self-determination (see Chapter 4 on Self Identity Theory), accompanied by leaders’ own increasing moral standing.<sup>65</sup>

Contrary to the pronouncement of some experts who allege particular leadership styles are more or less set with very little prospect for alteration,<sup>66</sup> Bass and Riggio’s research shows that core competencies of transactional leadership can be studied and learned. Before citing the competencies, however, it is important to note what Bass terms

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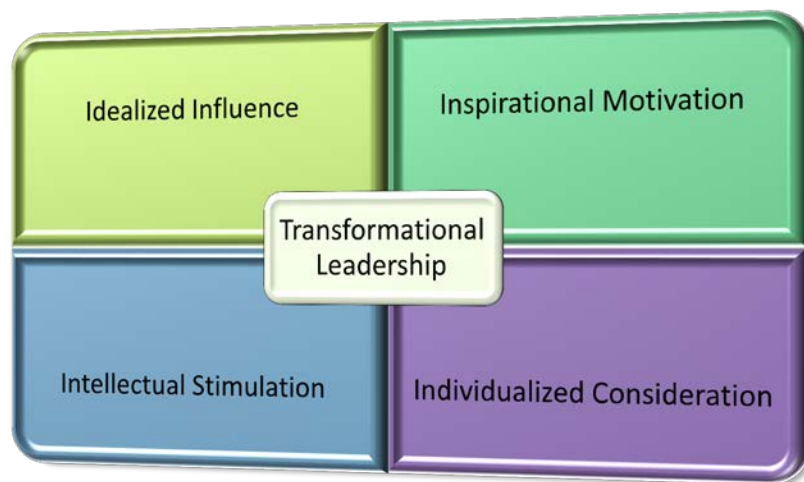
<sup>63</sup> Bernard M. Bass and Ronald E. Riggio, *Transforming Leadership*, 2nd ed. (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2008), 2544-2552, electronic format.

<sup>64</sup> James MacGregor Burns, *Transforming Leadership: A Pursuit of Happiness* (New York: Grove Press, 2003), 24, electronic format.

<sup>65</sup> Bass and Riggio, *Transforming Leadership*, 385-427.

<sup>66</sup> In his book, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009), Chapter 8, Gary McIntosh alleges the prospects of a church leader morphing his or her leadership style to meet the challenges of change are little to nil. His perspective is troubling as it fails to consider the possibility of God’s Spirit enacting change in an individual’s life especially that of a professional minister; and it runs contrary to research evidence. The data indicate, given the proper intrinsic motivation and tools, leaders can alter their behavioral styles, enter the “fundamental state of leadership (Quinn)” and learn the necessary skill set of transformational leadership.

as “authentic versus inauthentic” transformational leadership.<sup>67</sup> Complementing Burns’ work on morally uplifting nature of transforming leadership, Bass and Riggio distinguish behaviors learned in the interest of personal gain -even if those skills and behaviors are transformative in scope - from “authentic” transformative leadership exercised for altruistic purposes; i.e., to achieve vision that benefits a larger community. That being said, the core competencies of transformational leadership enumerated by Bass and Riggio are listed in the exhibits below.



**Figure 1 – Bass and Riggio’s Transformational Leadership Four Core Competencies**

The diagram above represents the interconnectedness of all four elements of Bass and Riggio’s conceptualization. It is not, however, fully illustrative or representative of the transformational leadership process as individuals vacillate in behaviors and tools used as leadership is exercised. Bass and Riggio introduce the concept of the Full Range Leadership Model to graphically reflect leadership styles operating along a continuum in the field. The table below summarizes their extensive discussion on the nature of each component.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Bass and Riggio, *Transforming Leadership*, 385-420.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 246-283.



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Table 1 - Four Components of Transformational Leadership Abbreviated Description

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Idealized Influence –	Transformational Leaders Are Role Models to be Emulated
Inspirational Motivation –	Transformational Leaders Articulates Worthwhile Vision
Intellectual Stimulation –	Transformational Leaders Encourage Imagination
Individualized Consideration –	Transformational Leader Pours Personal Energy into Others

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Stetzer and Rainer’s emphasis on the transformational environmental relationship is insightful in regard to transformational operation in church settings. They argue transforming leaders envision and practice the very environments they seek to realize. Resonant of Burns and Bass and Riggio above, they identify the following elements of transformational environments:

1. Transforming leaders are team-centric – As churches should represent the epitome of transformational environments, they stress that “[e]very believer is needed...[e]ach resource is precious because souls are precious.”<sup>69</sup>
2. Transforming leaders are missional – Stetzer and Rainer refer to this as “sharper mission focus.” Transforming leaders in church motivate their followers to “move beyond...church preferences and make missional decisions locally as well as globally.”<sup>70</sup> To see their purpose as mission as greater than sustaining the activities and programs of their congregation.

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<sup>69</sup> Stetzer and Rainer, *Lost and Found*, 93.

<sup>70</sup> Ed Stetzer and David Putman, *Breaking the Missional Code: Your Church Can Become a Missionary in Your Community* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2006), 49.

3. Transforming leaders actively coach and mentor new leaders – Organization depth and capacity is achieved as people develop their gifts and skills.

Developing others is as high a priority as creating strategies that consistently move the congregation towards realizing its vision. In fact, people development must move in tandem with vision attainment.

This schema stands in distinct opposition to the image of the CEO/Superman model Stetzer and Rainer describe, one which many pastors and other religious leaders have unquestioningly adopted;<sup>71</sup> and one which typifies the worst of transactional leadership.

### **A Word Concerning Transactional Leadership**

Transactional leadership represents a range of theories, behaviors, and strategies that exist along a management focused continuum. Contrary to the nomenclature, it is more focused on issues and concerns of managing than leading; and integral of its name it is *quid pro quo*-centric. Burns in *Transforming Leadership* defines it as “...the basic, daily stuff of politics, the pursuit of change in measured and often reluctant doses.”<sup>72</sup> As transactional management is less concerned with larger issues of cultural realignment, alteration, and the like, it is less useful as a means of congregational transformation and, as Burns notes, transactional approaches are change – in a comprehensive sense - averse. Ironically, it is the method by which many entities, inclusive of the Church in general and mainline Protestantism in particular, operates. Burns insists that in the effort to uncover what is best and most beneficial of transformational leadership clear distinctions between transactional and transformational must be had using clear and incisive language

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<sup>71</sup> Stetzer and Rainer, *Lost and Found*, 78-79.

<sup>72</sup> Burns, *Transforming Leadership*, 24.

(Denigration of transactional management is not my intention. Aspects of it are essential management tools as their implementation insures the daily functioning of countless entities. The discussion here pertains to the optimum modality for providing leadership to organizations facing constantly changing environments). He avers:

We must distinguish here between the verbs “change” and “transform,” using exacting definitions. To change is to substitute one thing for another, to give and take, to exchange places...<sup>73</sup>

As has been documented, transactional leadership primarily operates on rewards and punishments related typically to stipulated agreements and expectations. If an employee performs well, for instance, that employee may expect a monetary increase and/or promotion. By the same token, subpar performance may be met with reprimand, sanction, or dismissal. Within this framework, the range, kind and degree of reward-sanction dictates the benefit of the model. Bass and Riggio’s continuum ranges from “contingent reward,” which they view as beneficial in most management situations to Management-by-Exception Active (use of punishment to increase productivity) to Management-by-Exception Passive (use of punishment once standard of performance is breeched).<sup>74</sup>

### **The Change Behind Transformation**

From a biblical standpoint, the question now becomes in what ways does a personal process of transformation subsequently affect a church’s ability to confront and engage change theologically and practically? To begin to answer this, we turn to the New Testament to guide our investigative analysis into scriptural meanings of transformation.

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<sup>73</sup> Burns, *Transforming Leadership*, 24.

<sup>74</sup> Bass and Riggio, *Transforming Leadership*, 283-290.

There are four New Testament occasions in which some form of the word transform μεταμορφώω (metamorphoo) appears. Among the Synoptic gospels, Matthew and Mark use transformed (μετεμορφώθην) to describe the change in Jesus' appearance at the *transfiguration* event. Given this fact Matthew's version will stand as exemplar: "And he was *transfigured* before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light" (Matt. 17:2 NET). Here, the gospel writers' use of 'transformed' conveys "an outwardly perceptible change of *form (emphasis added)*" or transitional alteration to Jesus's physical appearance.<sup>75</sup> Luke takes an alternate route, so to speak, to achieve similar result. His gospel reads: "And as he was praying, the appearance of his countenance was altered ἕτερος (heteros), and his raiment became dazzling white" (Luke 9:29 RSV). Luke's choice of verb is indicative of change that was qualitatively and distinctively different.<sup>76</sup> Both verbs imply a singular (though significant!), transitional event occurred; which, by the way, harkens back to Moses's changed appearance after conferring with YHWH on the mountain in Exodus 34: 29-30 (Which is quite apropos since Christianity elevates Jesus as prophet/priest/king par excellence):

And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of the testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses knew not that the skin of his face sent forth beams while He talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face sent forth beams; and they were afraid to come nigh him (Exo. 34:29-30 Jewish Publication Society).

Comparative to Moses, Jesus's transformation is not permanent (2 Cor. 3:7 NET).

Contrastingly, however, Jesus's transformation does serve to communicate the nature of his true essence and affirmed his disciples' first century belief that "the righteous get

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<sup>75</sup> Barbara Friberg, Timothy Friberg, and Neva Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, in BibleWorks9, electronic format.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

new, glorified bodies in order to enter heaven.”<sup>77</sup> As remarkable as the event on ‘the mount of Transfiguration’ was, there is no evidence that a transformational permanency occurred at that time. Rather it is a moment of change and reversion to an original state hence, a transfiguration. Greater transformational permanency denotes change affecting state of being that is not transitory. That is to say, transition (transfiguration) is not the end purpose; transition is the process through which metamorphosis of both form and essence transpires. Something to which the Apostle Paul alludes in three unrelated passages: Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18; and Philippians 3:21. Each shall be treated in turn.

### **Transformed Inside and Out**

“Do not be conformed to this present world, but be transformed (μετεμορφώθην) by the renewing of your mind, so that you may test and approve what is the will of God – what is good and well-pleasing and perfect” (Romans 12:2 NET), Paul advised the Church at Rome. Transformation indicates changing to a higher state of being or, to borrow psychological development nomenclature, undergoing actualization; here, it is indicative of inward change. Paul’s declaration to the Church in Rome resonates with this understanding using the convention of comparison and contrast to offset conform συσχηματίζεσθε (suschematizo), which denotes absorbing outside influences in an infiltrating or invasive fashion, with transform μεταμορφώω (metamorphoo); which signifies an internal mental and spiritual flow that constructively affects one’s internal state of being, and which affects the nature and direction of one’s behavior. And as transformation is employed in the permissive voice it indicates change is something one

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<sup>77</sup> Study Note, *The Net Bible*, in BibleWorks9, electronic format.

must *allow* – i.e., to consent and agree to - in order to fully participate in the process. Furthermore, mind νοῦς in this context represents worldview and belief system in as much as it does cognitive faculties. The fact is not lost either that it is God who implicitly initiates and oversees the transformation process.

Transformation yields practical results. At first glance, the Apostle Paul's words as found in 2 Corinthians 3:18 may sound more spiritual than practical: "And we all, with unveiled faces reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed μεταμορφούμεθα into the same image from one degree of glory to another, which is from the Lord, who is the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:18 NET). The function of transformation in this verse relates to practicality, much as it did in Romans 12:2. Personal transformation initiates enlightenment/awareness/actualization, a new way of being and seeing the world, even if it is at times short-lived. The Apostle says in the preceding verse, "For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor. 3:17 NET). Perchance, this freedom of which Paul spoke encompasses the capacity (freedom) to envision the world anew, to see new possibilities? New vision necessitates new behaviors, practices that enable and widen the transformation process. In as much as the Lord provides freedom from the encumbrances and limitations of the law of which Paul alludes in this particular chapter; it practicably applies to a freedom to see the world and be in the world in ways that "[reflect] the glory of the Lord." Is this rendering of the text and of the meaning of transformation a *fair* assessment? I would argue in the positive citing Anthony C. Thiselton as a basis for my contention.

In brief, Thiselton states “[r]esponsible interpretation entails both critical explanation and creative understanding.”<sup>78</sup> Not wanting to fall into the trap of overconfidence or reaching, it is important to assess my reading. Thiselton asserts that, “how we understand a wider picture [necessarily] influence how we understand the elements that build it up...Preliminary understandings and responsible journeys into fuller understanding leave room for renegotiation, reshaping, and correction in the light of subsequent wrestling with the parts and the whole.”<sup>79</sup> Assessing, then, entails the search for mutual understandings inherent in the texts “without undermining the integrity of belief that is sincerely and responsibly held.”<sup>80</sup> It is to travel Grant Osborne’s spiral, the “*upward and constructive* process of moving from earlier pre-understanding to fuller understanding.”<sup>81</sup> It is to recast the meanings in a text in such a way as to grasp the unity of the whole from its parts and the significance of the parts manifest in the configuration of the whole.

The use of μετασχηματίζω (metaschematizo) – “to change the figure of...changing the outward form...”<sup>82</sup> in Paul’s letter to the Philippians is a synonym of transform that implies moving from a transitory condition towards accomplished change, of which Thayer mentions the more completed sense of transform rests in

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<sup>78</sup> Anthony C. Thiselton, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2009), 18.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 14-15.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>82</sup> Friberg et al., *Analytical Lexicon*.

μεταμορφώω.”<sup>83</sup> Paul’s words: “But our citizenship is in heaven – and we also await a savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform μετασχηματίζω these humble bodies of ours into the likeness of his glorious body by means of that power by which he is able to subject all things to himself” (Phil. 3:20-21 NET). Again, what is of import is the focus on transformation as initiated, mediated, and ultimately completed by God in Christ. All these examples taken together allow for the rudimentary formulation of a framework postulating a nascent theology of transformational leadership experiences that spawn and nourish congregation transformation efforts.

### **Developing a Theology of Transformational Leadership**

For Christians, the notion of change is pivotal and should not be considered anomalous or incongruent to the faith experience in particular or life in general. Yet change typically is met with anxious resistance and determined reluctance whether in faith or other life settings. Reflection on the faith journey reveals a conversion (metanoia) experience (moment of belief in Christ) initiates and signifies spiritual *change*, that moment when the love of God is accepted and appropriated as individually applicable and realizable. That moment of change - *metanoia* μετάνοια (remorse) – expresses “moral or religious”<sup>84</sup> adjustment in thought and perspective. The point is this: Change marks the beginning of one’s faith journey and punctuates its course. Ongoing transformation is as natural in faith as in all aspect of life. That being said, transformation – maybe not in that word – is significantly integral to the Christian faith. And perhaps, it behooves us to take a closer look at God’s use of change (i.e., God initiated

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<sup>83</sup> Joseph H. Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, s.v. “metamorphosis,” in BibleWorks9, electronic format.

<sup>84</sup> Friberg et al., *Analytical Lexicon*.



transformation situations) and our subsequent development of a transformation theology. If God is changeless as scriptures intimate (Psalms 102:24-27; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17), then it should follow that God's love for humanity is also changeless. Change is inevitable, still God loves us (John 3:16); as God loves us and desires none to be lost.<sup>85</sup> God uses the vagrancies of time and change as opportunities to engage, interface with and development us.

The gospel message is one of live-altering transformation. To this point Stetzer and Rainer remark: "We treasure the concept of "transformation," because radical change is the heart of the Christian message and because the power of the gospel changes everything - lives, churches, communities."<sup>86</sup> It is a process of becoming; that which we were diminishes and that which we are to be slowly emerges but not without fits and starts, failures and successes. The Apostle Paul phrased it thusly, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (1 Cor. 5:17 RSV). The new *καινός* of which Paul speaks "denotes the new primarily in reference to quality..."<sup>87</sup> Transformation in this context affects the substance of who we are, surpassing and suffusing the old *ἀρχαῖος* nature with the attributes and higher quality of the new. As we become new our perspective and mindset transforms, attaining ever greater perspective and knowledge of the One who initiates and oversees that process (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

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<sup>85</sup> "This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1Timothy 2:3 RSV).

<sup>86</sup> Stetzer and Rainer, *Lost and Found*, 1.

<sup>87</sup> Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon*.

Churches are intended to be conduits of God-initiated transformation, the living expression of God's transformational love, message and grace. The gospel writer Matthew frames Jesus's transformational commissioning of the Church thusly: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Matt. 28:19-20 RSV). It is the process of "going" and making "learners" and teaching that communicate the essence of transformation in a systematic, sustainable matrix. However, from time to time church leaders and congregations – as all people - require transformational experiences as it is human nature to gravitate towards that which is comfortable; that which maintains our proclivities for the status quo; for constancy and certitude even at the expense of personal, professional and occupational development; i.e., adoption and institutionalization of practice combined with tradition (institutional idolatry) fused with resistance to and denial of the need for ongoing change, misidentifying the sustainability of the matrix and of our roles as the missional purpose or goal. As Stetzer and Rainer go on to observe, "...when you put not just the noun *transformation* and *church* together...but put together the actual occurrence of transformation and the community of people called the church, the result is powerful."<sup>88</sup> The converse of that statement is potentially devastating. When you put together the people of God who are the church with stagnation, the result is apathy; myopic to total absence of vision; deficiency of passion; ruinous relational decline. God-initiated transformation becomes necessary as it furthers God's message and palpable presence of hope as it re-ignites the necessary burn

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<sup>88</sup> Stetzer and Rainer, *Lost and Found*, 1.

of radical change in the lives of believers. Examination and reflection of a scriptural referent in the book of Acts will help flesh out this last statement.

### **The Acts of the Holy Spirit Toward Transformation**

Acts contains the story or narrative of the early Church. Written sometime between 70 and 100 A.D., it depicts the early church's growth and struggles. Willimon conveys, "It deals with issues which are always in season in the church: questions about the relationship between Christians and Jews, Christians and pagans; issues related to the Christian's stance within the modern state; problems with prayer; the purpose of preaching and teaching in the church; and a host of other dilemmas which press upon the contemporary church..."<sup>89</sup> Stories are important for they tell us something about ourselves unobtrusively so. Their use informs our lives in intricate array bringing richness and imagination to the arts and literature; therapeutic balm to our collective psyches; inspiration and freshness to our otherwise humdrum existence. Narrative whets our collective thirst for knowing and doing, and especially hearing of those who actually *do*. Re-reading Acts modernly as narrative (a story to be audibly retold) and recounted as sacred scripture, then, helps reinvigorate the imagination – reliving the sensations and feel of real life happenings – grounding and linking present experience with that of the early church. Substantiating this point, Willimon refers to Stanley Hauerwas's statement that "the church exists as a story-formed community."<sup>90</sup> As such it makes eminent sense for a "story-formed community" to refer to its historical story to reflect upon its present practice and inform the direction of its current journey. Willimon further relates, "A story

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<sup>89</sup> William H. Willimon, *Acts* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988), 1.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

not only means something but also *does* something.”<sup>91</sup> Acts is as much – if not more so – the story of the actions of God over against the retelling of the feats and flaws of the early church. Its counter leitmotif is that of synchronicity – things happen for a reason; or to put it another way, God creates meaningfulness out of random things that happen.<sup>92</sup>

### **Peter and Cornelius: Evidence of Personal Transformation Affecting the Church**

According to Willimon, “[t]he story of Cornelius...is the longest narrative in Acts...Judged solely on the basis of the amount of space Luke gives to the story, we know that we are dealing with a crucial concern of Acts, a pivot for the entire book, at turning point in the long drama of redemption.”<sup>93</sup> Evidently, Willimon’s critique here smacks somewhat of “the new hermeneutic” in New Testament criticism, that Luke’s description and particular use of language expose his intent.”<sup>94</sup> But more is afoot here than an exercise in form criticism and an insider’s take on what Willimon calls “that rather confusing if not embarrassing period when the Church has to explain to itself how such a state of affairs [i.e., the burgeoning growth of gentile believers within the predominate Jewish church structure] came to be and why.”<sup>95</sup> This story is also one of tremendous transformation. The Apostle Peter’s ongoing struggle to transform is lengthy and of particularly interest to note (See Matthew 16:13-23; Luke 22:54-62; and John 21:15-19); his relative speedy willingness to do so in this passage is an important

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<sup>91</sup> Willimon, *Acts*, 2.

<sup>92</sup> “We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose” (Rom 8:28 New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>93</sup> Willimon, *Acts*, 95.

<sup>94</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, *John/Acts*, vol. 9, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981), 210.-211.

<sup>95</sup> Willimon, *Acts*, 93-94.

milestone in his maturity and stark reminder that God-initiated change is part and parcel of the Christian lifestyle. Nevertheless, his decision generates repercussions, especially in the home church at Jerusalem. It seems, “the church must be dragged kicking and screaming into the movements of God.”<sup>96</sup> This serves as vivid reminder that transformation is not without its tensions and moments of uncertainty. Nor did Peter’s willingness to transform guarantee that the institutional church would necessarily follow his lead. Herein lays six elements or movements that may prove formulationally useful as fundamental components in composing our theology of transformation. The first three elements are sequential and exist at the personal level. Full engagement of these elements is requisite at the personal phase prior to second movement engagement, which is sequential and operate at the community-oriented level. Element one of the first movement is vision presentation; that is, God initiates personal transformation by presenting a mission or idea to attain or situational tension to relieve. Second, there is the challenge; that is the event that represents and functions as the pivotal crisis. (Plausibility dictates that crisis prior to vision presentation may very well occur.) That, too, may serve as an instance of God-initiated transformation. Our model, however, identifies vision as primary occurrent as some notion (whether spiritual and/or perhaps emotional) is extant prior to realization that a crisis or challenge is imminent. The God-initiated transformation model seeks to articulate the most elegant means by which to describe both scriptural and contemporary instances of these phenomena without falling into the theological trap of prescribing and circumscribing God’s movements; which leads to the third element, obedience that is seeking ways to actualize God’s vision. This second

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<sup>96</sup> Willimon, *Acts*, 103.

moment of three elements follows as the transforming individual (leader) seeks vision actualization vis-a-vis obedience.

Movement two, element one is the leader's act of envisioning, seeking to articulate the vision received of God in ways that resonate and inspire others. Element two entails emulation. This element presupposes establishing sub-elements such as garnering critical mass; building enthusiasm; creating new culture – which marks a congregation's willingness to follow (emulate)/articulate the envisioned reality and imitate the leader's comportment. At this point congregational behaviors may either feedback into the first movement loop at the point of challenge or continue its cycle towards the third element namely, congregational transformation. Congregational transformation denotes experiencing consistent successful degrees of congregational cultural change and alignment of spiritual and tangible strategies to achieve aspects of the envisioned reality. The leader and congregation share in the ongoing refinement and implementation of envisioning process towards deeper levels of actualization. However, if emulation is not adequately achieved or breaks down, the flow intersects with the initial challenge point, necessitating continued obedience and supplemental envisioning articulation strategies to bolster the sub-processes leading to emulation. As both movements represent cyclical and near simultaneous processes the movements and feedback configuration are presented in the exhibit below.

Personal to Congregation Transformation:  
God-initiated Transformation Model

Exhibit 1

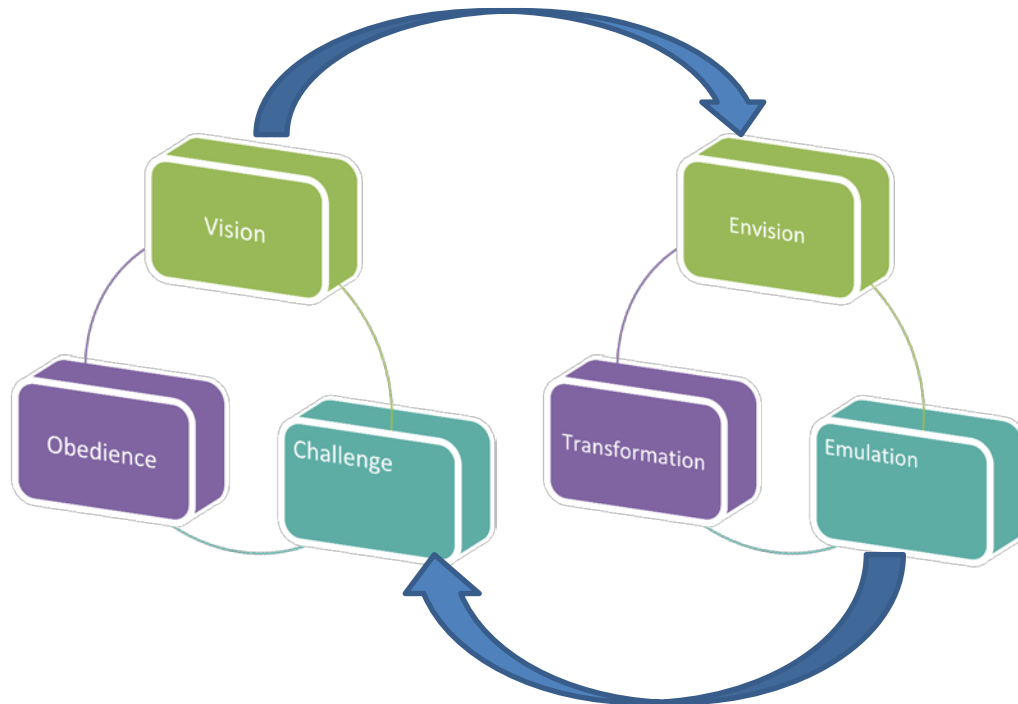


Figure 2 – God-initiated Transformation Processes

Note: Movement 1 & 2 cycles flows clockwise.

Movement 1:  
Personal Transformation  
Transformation

Movement 2:  
Congregational

Michael Fletcher in his book *Overcoming Barriers to Growth* says,

This may be the hardest but most important job of the senior pastor – finding God’s vision for the local church he leads. The Bible says, “It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings” (Proverbs 25:2). God isn’t being unkind in “hiding” the vision within himself – just the opposite. In concealing it, He forces us to seek Him, and in seeking Him, we find more than a simple plan.<sup>97</sup>

Fletcher’s statement places the onus of the work of knowing God’s vision upon the individual. And it presupposes that God is ever furtive and elusive with direction and coy about God’s intension. Rather than discount Fletcher’s assertion about finding God’s vision – there is great merit in disciplining one’s self to search out God and the things of God - I will concede that a) recognizing God’s vision requires effort and b) most importantly, following God’s vision takes obedience. I proffer that people lack in the obedience department more so that at recognition. Peter evidences obedience to God’s vision in a most extraordinary fashion. Before getting to Peter, some consideration of the storyline must be had.

Cornelius was a gentile, a Roman citizen, and a centurion of the Italian Regiment (probably Cohors II Italia civium romanorum voluntariorum miliaria) – the modern day equivalent of a captain responsible for upwards of 80 men.<sup>98</sup> Luke cites him as a “devout, God-fearing man,” probably more a reference to his religiosity than to any official connection to Judaism as a proselyte.<sup>99</sup> Schnabel argues for the likelihood that Cornelius was a Jewish sympathizer,<sup>100</sup> which prima facie seem less plausible given his rank and

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<sup>97</sup> Michael Fletcher, *Overcoming Barriers to Growth* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2007), 27.

<sup>98</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel and Clinton E. Arnold, *Acts: Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 485.

<sup>99</sup> Longenecker, *Acts*, 385.

<sup>100</sup> Schnabel and Arnold, *Acts*, 485.



degree of responsibly through Caesarea. It is more likely as Longenecker stipulates that in his effort to exercise his faith in god (YHWH?) he gained the recognition from the Jewish community for his charity and fairness and a ‘god fearing’ individual.<sup>101</sup> Be that as it may, the narrative states he had a vision in which “an angel of God” spoke to him concerning is piety and charity. In short order he was directed to summon Simon Peter, who was lodging in Joppa. In consecutive fashion on the next day, the narrative relates that Peter, who busily toiled to lead the Jewish church, was staying with a Jewish believer named Simon. Peter had retired onto the roof of Simon’s home for prayer as he awaited the next meal. At some point he slipped into a trance (Longenecker speculates whether Peter’s hunger and the air suffused aroma of foods coupled with the sails of ships in the harbor provided God the natural backdrop for the sheet-like object filled with animals clean and unclean).<sup>102</sup> Here, Peter’s God-initiated transformation commences. God’s vision to Peter is of an object filled with clean and unclean animals. His directive was succinct and clear: to arise; to kill; to eat. Peter refuses as the issue of holiness and the profane are significant in his worldview (For a deeper discussion on “Pure and Profane Animals” see Schnabel’s excursus in *Acts, Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*) and God reveals that which God has cleaned cannot be designated unclean.<sup>103</sup> In symbolic fashion, the vision occurs three times. Peter ponders the vision as it presents a significant challenge. When Cornelius’s envoy arrives and beckons, their obvious gentile appearances and speech elevated his challenge to crisis. Once Cornelius’s men conveyed the message that an angel of God directed that Peter accompany them back, full

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<sup>101</sup> Longenecker *Acts*, 385-386.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 387.

<sup>103</sup> Schnabel and Arnold, *Acts*, 488-490.

crisis was realized. No doubt the reason Peter arranged for such a large contingent to travel with him and Cornelius' men the next day. The gentile/Jew barrier presented him with a significant and expansive dilemma. Peter understood the vision; he recognized the challenge; and he obeyed which was the initiation point of his personal transformation.

### **The Task of Envisioning**

The events that transpired in the house of Cornelius served as confirmation of the initial vision. Peter was convinced of the new *καὶνός* thing God had enacted; his Jewish compatriots were witness that God had blessed the gentiles in exact manner to the disciples on the day of Pentecost with the gift of Glossolalia, the gift of the Holy Spirit, et cetera. Peter surmised the event saying, "...I now truly understand that God does not show favoritism in dealing with people" (Acts 10:34 NET). Baptism ratified the day's happenings as Peter's new world view aligned with God's rule of equanimity within the household of faith. Something of which he had to convince the home church in Jerusalem as the news of his actions reached their ears.

Peter's actions elicited sharp criticism (Acts 11:1-18). Some well-meaning believers caught in the trappings of institutional Christianity – even at this early phase – questioned Peter's violation of protocol. Possessed by the power of the vision and emboldened by the evidence of its efficacy through obedience, Peter envisioned (recollected his vision) to the Jerusalem church; interpreted its meaning in ways that challenged and also invited them to obedience (emulation). Corroborating witness from Peter's six travel companions pressed his critics into the untenable position of prescribing the movement of God. Congregational transformation was realized as the church praised God and worked to realign its resources and perspective to accept the gentile believers into its ranks.

### **CHAPTER THREE**

#### **TRANSFORMATION THEORY**

“[I]n failed transformations you find plans and programs trying to play the role of vision.” Michael Fullan

Given the wealth of organizational and change management information available, why are mainline denominational churches that by nature ought to be “transformational,” so consistently ineffective and at a quandary - in the aggregate - when it comes to managing and negotiating their own congregational transformations? At base, the challenge is change, the constant conversion and modification of social structures and interactions; technological and financial innovations; expanding economies that bring advances and new ideas and products that define our world. Amid this frenetic din of change, epitomized as progress and new lifestyle novelties, is the tension between that which is old and known against that which is new and unknown, tensions that wreak havoc on the desire for certitude, social stability, and relational equilibrium. People want to know what to expect and change is expectational uncertainty. Perhaps, the idea of change – expectational uncertainty - flies in the face of a working definition of faith (certitude) for congregations? Or could it not be more of a question of heuristic approach to faith more than what faith is by nature or purports to be? These are interesting yet ancillary questions. The congregational change of which I speak is expectational uncertainty and grappling with issues of faith at a time of greater social transition; that is, coming to terms with life and faith in a postmodern world - a situation for which there is no simple answer or miracle solution. Also, change is analogous to crisis, an emergent,

critical situation requiring conscientious and diligent management. Typically, organizational crisis demand assessment, options analysis from which all possible alternatives emerge, and subsequent execution strategies - all engaged in to determine the best way to correct the crisis; e.g., organizational imbalance or impending failure. Implementation of any corrective is fundamentally and by definition, a change initiative; a process or set of plans designed to manage a crisis which represents change. John P. Kotter, former Harvard Business School professor and prominent organizational management expert, notes, "When an organization is in a crisis, the first change project within a larger change process is often the save-the-ship or turnaround effort. For six to twenty-four months, people take decisive actions to stop negative cash flow and keep the organization alive."<sup>104</sup> 'Save-the-ship' is the most primary normative, apparent response taken but not necessarily the most efficacious. A commonly stated aphorism in the change management world is that two of three change initiatives fail predicated on the fact that successful handling of change depends on any number of variables consisting of hard theoretical applications and trickier to measure soft practices.<sup>105</sup> Prominent among change management factors is leadership, what it is and is not and a bevy of other factors, not the least of which is a leader's state of mind.

### **Achieving Personal Transformation**

"Managing change *is* tough, but part of the problem is that there is little agreement on what factors most influence transformation initiatives. Ask five executives

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<sup>104</sup> Kotter, *Leading Change*, 429-432.

<sup>105</sup> Harold L. Sirkin, Perry Keenan, and Alan Jackson, "The Hard Side of Change Management," *Harvard Business Review Online* (2005): 1-13, <http://www.il-inc.com/pdf/HBR%20The%20Hard%20Side%20of%20Change%20Management.PDF> (accessed February 9, 2013).

to name the one factor critical for the success of these programs, and you'll probably get five different answers," says Harold L. Sirkin et al.<sup>106</sup> Disagreement as to what constitutes the essentials of transformation management appears to be the heart of the transformation conundrum. Most everyone has an opinion on the issue. Using data driven analysis and metrics, the 'hard' factors mentioned above, many fail to take into consideration the most critical factor of all prior to launching organizational change initiatives; that is dealing with personal transformation. Is it possible to enact a change process without taking time to assess personal resources and volition? Yes, it is possible but the majority of such efforts succumb beneath the weight of their own enormity long before any lasting organizational benefits are achieved. Robert Quinn, Margaret Elliot Tracy Collegiate Professor of Business Administration and Organizational Behavior at University of Michigan, has written extensively on this topic. Quinn describes the need for achieving the "fundamental state of leadership,"<sup>107</sup> the acquisition of which provides anyone within an organization the leadership qualities necessary to garner critical mass and lead change. According to Quinn there is the normal state<sup>108</sup> out of which one operates.

People and organizations tend to progress and then plateau. At first, the plateau provides time for consolidation and recovery. Later, it becomes a zone of *comfort* (emphasis mine). In our comfort zone, we know how to be in control. We know how to manage. We know how to do the things we need to do. They become routine. And as long as nothing changes, we can be successful. The problem is that the universe is an ever-changing system. From the external world, we receive signals suggesting the need for change – the need to grow beyond our routines and move to a higher

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<sup>106</sup> Sirkin, Perry and Jackson, "The Hard Side of Change Management," 1.

<sup>107</sup> Robert E. Quinn, *Building the Bridge as You Walk On It: A Guide for Leading Change* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 21-25.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 18-21.

level of personal complexity. We all tend to deny these signals. Usually it is not until we are jolted that we are willing to make a significant alternation in who we are and how we do things.<sup>109</sup>

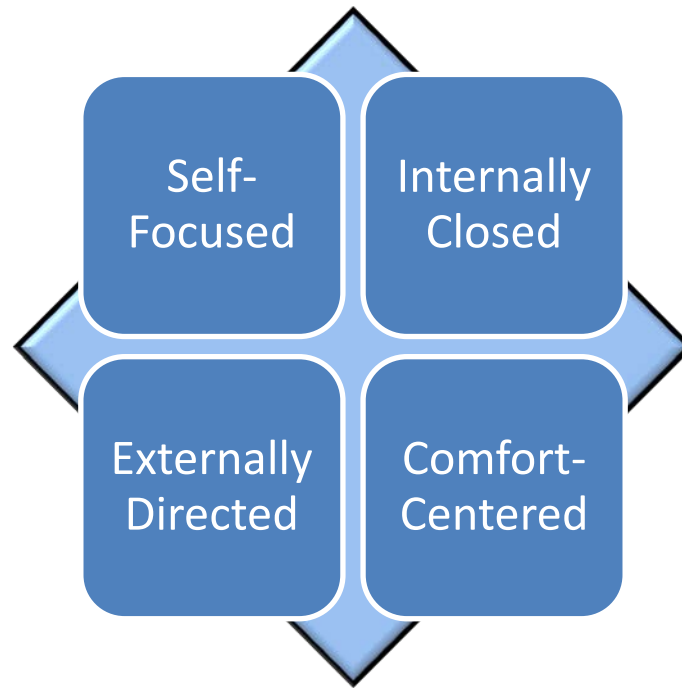
This normal state is characterized by the comfort zone, a closed system from which one projects one's personal reality onto the world. One can be part of an organization or business or municipal enterprise sorely lacking in efficiencies and effectiveness yet remain comfortably unaware of the pressing necessity to rectify and reorganize because such activities impinge upon the zone of comfort. Quinn goes onto argue that once the need for organizational change becomes increasingly apparent, many people experience "failure to change" symptoms. Per Quinn, "As we become increasingly closed, we lose energy and hope. We experience negative emotions such as fear, insecurity, doubt, and denial that lead us to shut out the signals being sent by evolving external realities. We thus become increasingly disconnected and lose still more energy. We become trapped in a vicious cycle."<sup>110</sup> This vicious cycle leads to what Quinn calls "slow death," the end result of staying in the normal state during times of needed transformation.

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<sup>109</sup> Quinn, *Building the Bridge*, 18.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

Quinn represents normal state relationship using quadrants:



**Figure 3 – Quinn’s Normal State Quadrant**

“To be in the normal state is to be externally driven, internally closed, self-focused, and comfort centered.”<sup>111</sup> In other words, it is to allow one’s self to be influenced and driven by external and internal forces or stimuli.

Interestingly, Quinn’s quadrant meshes with identity development theories. Take comfort-centeredness, for example. Having a stable environment aids psychological development and growth (see discussion on “*umwelt*” in chapter 4 on Identity Theory). Our environment provides significant clues and models upon which the strata of personal identity (ego) is formed. Environmental stability promotes levels of inner comfort. Environmental instability – expectational uncertainty – creates internal instability, the obvious signal for change. (As noted in chapter 4, healthy ego-identity development entails encountering change (psychological and/or social stimuli), which includes

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<sup>111</sup> Quinn, *Building the Bridge*, 19.

mastering information, relational skills, and experiencing personal transformation and transition to the next stage of life. Failure to do so indicates developmental issues accompanied by possible maladaptive behavior.) The response to react by protecting the zone of comfort, and therefore one's identity, is quite natural, Quinn argues. It is an example of an organism seeking to "maintain the current equilibrium."<sup>112</sup>

The other facets work similarly: External direction relates to group identity in general, and speculation about how one is seen by others, in particular. As Quinn notes, "I...define myself by how I think I am seen and how well I am able to obtain external resources."<sup>113</sup> Self-focused defines itself and is also natural behavior. Quinn's concept might have better been served by use of narcissism, as what he describes is the type of behavior – though naturally occurring – inordinately places personal interests above others. The idea of being internally closed is accompanied by offsetting complexity that reflects the complicated workings of human behavior.

As we seek to preserve our ego and our culture, as we strive to impress others, as we become increasingly self-conscious, we also tend to feel increasingly less secure. We thus call on our defense mechanisms to shut out any signals calling for change. This further increases our sense of insecurity. When we most need to be externally open is the moment when we most tend to be internally closed...We espouse a desire to create new results while in fact our primary desire is to stay in our zone of comfort.<sup>114</sup>

To achieve the "fundamental state of leadership," one must transition first. This transition is something Quinn calls "deep change," which was the focus of his book by the same name.

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<sup>112</sup> Quinn, *Building the Bridge*, 19.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 21.



Deep change, “a process of transformation,”<sup>115</sup> encompasses knowing one’s self, the process of genuinely assessing one’s resolve to meet challenge and change; assessing one’s skill sets, competencies, and areas of growth Michael Fullan further explains as “looking inside yourself and your practice as full-time endeavor.”<sup>116</sup> Transition management answers are not simply attained by examining results from data sources, compiling reports of consultants and experts then implementing “big box” or even highly tailored programs designed to meet specific organizational contours and culture. Evidence suggests the answers come not from outside. One has to start inside and look for the best external connections to further develop one’s own thinking and action.<sup>117</sup> Personal transformation comes to grips with the down sides of Quinn’s normal states quadrant; choosing to repeatedly extricate one’s self from the zone of comfort. Determining to be driven less by narcissism and perceived external criticism of others and proactively learning about one’s changing environment. This is personal assessment: questioning one’s perceived experience, examining the how and why of the current situation; gauging to what external realities one has turned a blind eye and determining one’s degree of culpability for one’s current state. Moreover, self-assessment helps determine one other overlooked factor: inattention to the current situation by over working. That propensity to hide the need for personal transformation by that deadly tailspin Robert E. Quinn calls the destructive choice “to stay very busy.”<sup>118</sup> Deep change

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<sup>115</sup> Robert E. Quinn, *Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), xii.

<sup>116</sup> Michael Fullan, *Change Leader: Learning to Do What Matters Most* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 6.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, xii, xiii, 3-12.

<sup>118</sup> Quinn, *Deep Change*, 18.

pushes beyond superficial, “shovel ready” intrapersonal activity to establishing conscientious, committed, and authentically transformative life changing decisions regarding how one views self and the world. It is a “developmental process.”<sup>119</sup> As such, its processes are predictable, and change management of self is something one can learn. The normative state, what Quinn alludes to as ‘slow death’ in stagnant personal and organizational situations, are indicated by the following signs of dysfunction.

- Opts for short-term personal survival over long-term...responsibility.
- Adopts superficial changes in lieu of real change to “basic structures and processes.”
- Embraces “don’t rock the boat” attitude or culture.
- Maintain high levels of busyness unrelated to altering core issues.<sup>120</sup>

Additionally, Quinn goes on to argue that it is important to recognize just how wide spread this phenomena is, especially “in conservative, ‘don’t rock the boat’ cultures.”<sup>121</sup> It should go without saying that the majority of Christian congregations have conservative cultures in terms of maintaining long standing group outlook and traditions. Deep change charts a course where individuals (and organizations) learn to place “collective responsibility” over “personal interests,”<sup>122</sup> and pursue effective leadership over the urge to manage effectively (more on this later). Enacting deep change requires asking different sets of questions. For example: operating from the normal state, one is primarily concerned with comfort zone maintenance and striving to protect self by

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<sup>119</sup> Quinn, *Deep Change*, 12.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 15-18.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 18-20.

fulfilling self-interests. These behaviors are typified by the question ‘what do I want’? Deep Change turns that question on end. As Quinn says “we ask, What do I want to create”?<sup>123</sup>

Quinn’s fundamental state of leadership describes the level where personal “reinvention” commences.<sup>124</sup> Yet it is not an operational state one maintains for protracted periods of time. Quinn refers to it as a “temporary psychological condition.”<sup>125</sup> According to Quinn, the demands of this state are such that it is not possible for one to permanently transition to this higher energetic level. Imagine the workings of a hydrogen atom based on the simple Rutherford-Bohr model; basically, a nucleus with a single electron in its orbit. Add the proper stimulus and the electron jumps to a higher energy state. It is still a hydrogen atom but behaves differently in direct correlation to the added stimulus. Once the stimulus is removed, atomic excitation decreases and the atom return to its ‘resting’ state. There is no need to push this analogy any farther. The fundamental state of leadership is a higher level of personal being/operation, from which one must return. While operating in that state, however, Quinn asserts “we become more purpose-centered, internally driven, other-focused, and externally open,”<sup>126</sup> attributes that countervail the effects of the normative state. Quinn elaborates:

In the fundamental state of leadership, we become less comfort centered and more purpose-centered...as we begin to pursue purpose in the face of uncertainty, we gain hope and energy...In the fundamental state of leadership, we also become less externally directed and more internally directed...We begin to transcend our own hypocrisy, closing the gap

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<sup>123</sup> Quinn, *Deep Change*, 21

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

between who we think we are and who we think we should be...Our values and behavior are be-coming more *congruent* (emphasis mine). Our internal and external realities are becoming more aligned...In the fundamental state of leadership, we also become less self-focused and more other-focused...We often become more transparent and authentic. Our relationships increase in meaning, trust, and caring...In the fundamental state of leadership, we become less internally closed and more externally open...we increase in our confidence that we can learn our way forward in an uncertain and changing world. When we have such adaptive confidence, we become genuinely open to all forms of feedback...we learn and adapt...[w]e...grow in awareness, competence, and vision. Yet becoming externally open is an extraordinary thing to do.<sup>127</sup>

The primary lesson to be learned from Quinn's scheme is the rule of personal *congruence*, integrity and consistency that affects the totality of one's relationships. This is the heart of personal transformation, of entering the fundamental state of leadership. Personal congruence begins with a qualitative change within. Quinn quotes Robert Fritz's book, *The Path of Least Resistance*, regarding this. In it, Fritz talks about making primary, secondary, and fundamental choices.<sup>128</sup> Primary choices equate to goals, what one wants to achieve. Secondary choices facilitate fulfillment of primary choices. That is to say, one's goal is to purchase gasoline for one's vehicle. One's secondary choice may relate to which route takes the least time driving to the gas station. "A fundamental choice is a choice that has to do with a state of being, or basic life orientation, whereas a primary choice concerns itself with specific results and a secondary choice supports those results."<sup>129</sup> A fundamental choice, then, relates to one's essential character and presumes the capacity for character adaptation that character can change for the positive. This

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<sup>127</sup> Quinn, *Building the Bridge*, 23.

<sup>128</sup> Robert Fritz, "Primary, Secondary, and Fundamental Choice," in *The Path of Least Resistance: Learning to Become the Creative Force in Your Own Life* (Newfane, VT: Newfane Press, 2010), 3905-4205, First Kindle Original Edition.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 4164.

positive change leads a person towards greater congruence, which serves as core value system upon which all life decisions are based. The result: personal transformation that ebbs and flows between Quinn's fundamental and normal states. The balance of Quinn's books consists of empirical findings, case studies, and exercises to help one align values with outcomes (congruence), noting that not all values carry the same worth or weight. Ample data on this subject seem to suggest transformative leaders transform people more than organizations.<sup>130</sup>

### **Framing a New Reality: Modern Church in a Post-Modern World**

Change is hard to define because it is such a broad term. An attested meaning of the word as listed in the *American Heritage Dictionary* is "A transition from one state, condition, or phase to another." Given that churches (like other institutions) favor organizational homeostasis in conjunction with static environments, is it any wonder that anything that represent disruption to the status quo is met with resistance? Quinn refers to such organizations and institutions as "don't rock the boat" cultures."<sup>131</sup> Anything, whether it is new leadership, new initiatives, changing environment, all challenges are resisted openly and sometimes fought surreptitiously. Even worse, denial of circumstances may set in further complicating matters. The issue here, however, delves deeper than the natural inclination to maintain the status quo. The point is homeostasis, maintaining internal stability, is what institutions do. To act otherwise is to act against their nature. Like individuals, organizations need to learn to transform themselves as a

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<sup>130</sup> See the writings of Robert Quinn, Michael Fullan, John P. Kotter, Gary L. McIntosh, Ronald A. Heifetz, and Marty Linsky, for example.

<sup>131</sup> Quinn, *Building the Bridge*, 18.

natural outgrowth of institutional life. Doing so requires understanding their environment as well as their organizational identity.

Postmodernism is not a philosophical phase or artistic/societal fad. It is a *Weltanschauung* (worldview) that emerges from and, in some significant ways, runs counter to its historical antecedent: modernism. Some experts point to fifteenth and sixteenth Europe as the birth of the modern age, with thinkers such as “Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler” leading the “scientific revolution.” Others pinpoint the seventeenth century with the “Cognito of Descartes.”<sup>132</sup> Though the exact moment of its origin is debatable, its features are quite definable. The following list developed by former general minister and president of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Richard L. Hamm is instructive.<sup>133</sup>

Table 2 - Features of Modernism

Immutable physical laws characterize the universe (Descartes)
Linear, rational, symmetrical
Nation states are the building blocks of the world order
Office – particularly hierarchical office – grants authority
WASP males drive broad social consensus
Communication is oratorical, formal, and indirect
Progress is inevitable.

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<sup>132</sup> Robert C. Greer, *Mapping Postmodernism: A Survey of Christian Options* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003), 37-38.

<sup>133</sup> Richard L. Hamm, *Recreating the Church: Leadership for the Postmodern Age* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2007), 15.

Other features of modernism include: reaction against Enlightenment objectivism and the presumption of human goodness; creation of a world defined by science, progressivism, and secularism; adoption of an aesthetic notion that beauty resides in the eye of the beholder; and that the ability to create a better world dwells within humanity via science and technology, along with an ironic commitment to the concept of absolute truth. Greer provides yet another layer of modernism's underpinnings epistemologically, stressing a concept he calls *distanciation*. He defines *distanciation* as "a perceptual scheme where the world is divided into subject and object."<sup>134</sup> This is portrayal of the distant, detached observer watching the world with objectivity, "to render conclusions that are definitive and absolute."<sup>135</sup> Distanciation is viewing the world with supposed objectivity and also as object - that thing which is detached and disparate from. Distanciation is linked philosophically to a concomitant assumption of "radical doubt."<sup>136</sup> That is, the Cartesian epitomization of one being certain of nothing but self, "Je pense donc Je suis."

What is certain is that modernism came into its own around the mid-nineteenth century, specifically at the time of the Industrial Revolution, a time when forward progress seemed ordained and the prospect of better living was nearly inextricably linked to the idea of continuous technological development. This same combination of social and technological factors, mixed with our own brand of nationalistic progressivism exemplified by 'Manifest Destiny', energized what Hamm refers to as the "religious

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<sup>134</sup> Greer, *Mapping Postmodernism*, 218-219.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 219.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 222.

majority” in America.<sup>137</sup> Religious sectarians, who fled to the United States searching for religious freedom generations earlier, had subsequently coalesced into “voluntary, non-legal,” erstwhile “official” churches of the country.<sup>138</sup> That is to say, though no brand of denomination is recognized or recipient of official state stamp, Protestant Christianity functioned, de facto, as such. By the mid-nineteenth century many denominations had formally established themselves while launching an array of missionary efforts to the Far East and Africa, as well as to slaves and Native Americans throughout the inner regions of the North American continent, hoping to shape the totality of this nation to their western Christian ideal. However, American’s modern society influenced the ethos of mainline Protestant congregations to a greater degree than had been imagined. In their desire to spread the absolute truth as they faithfully understood it, Greer argues mainline churches (comprised of Lutherans, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Reformed Church and Disciples of Christ) opened themselves to powerful philosophical influences:

It is my belief that to a large extent, the church-especially its Protestant evangelical and fundamentalists traditions-is unaware and essentially uncritical of its philosophical undercarriage. In regards to the question of absolute truth, the church has failed to recognize that due to its complicity with modernism, absolute truth has become a Trojan horse to the church. It was offered as a gift by Enlightenment scholars and left outside the church walls. Revered as something intrinsically good, it was later wheeled through the church’s heavily guarded theological gates by its own leadership and afforded a prominent place inside the walls for all to see and admire. Within its bowels, however, was hidden a pernicious enemy to the Christian faith. This enemy has subsequently come out of hiding and, in the name of truth, conquered much of Christian theology in both its liberal and conservative traditions.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Hamm, *Recreating the Church*, 35.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Greer, *Mapping Postmodernism*, 1-2.



The argument is that modern Protestantism became the religious custodian and standard bearer of natural order, progress through education (science), and deference to hierarchical authority. By the twentieth century, congregations mirrored larger society as their programs and ministries ran like well-oiled machines. Ecclesiastical rituals adopted mechanistic language to articulate sacred observances. Here, Hamm makes a startling observation:

Perhaps our first clue comes as we are “installed” in a role in the life of a congregation. Installed? Dishwashers are installed. Parts are installed. But should ministers be installed...As always, our language both betrays and shapes our assumptions. Doesn’t an “installation service” sound an awful lot like what happens when we call service people to install a new appliance? The underlying assumption, a modern assumption, is that the church is a big machine that requires certain parts in order to function effectively. Thus a minister is installed to play his or her part in the ecclesiastical machine...The minister is installed to make the machine work properly *as it was designed*...<sup>140</sup>

He presses his point further:

Thus, in modern church systems, a minister is installed to be a sort of governor: a governor is a mechanical devise that regulates the speed of an engine to be certain that it goes along at a steady pace no matter what kind of load is put on the engine.<sup>141</sup>

Hamm further observes that this kind of thinking is linked to the belief that, if properly organized, the church could redeem the world. This is the sort of presumption that seems to underlie Walter Rausenbusch’s social gospel emphases and efforts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Modernism assumed “the arts and sciences would...control the forces of nature [and] also the understanding of self and world, moral progress, justice in social

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<sup>140</sup> Hamm, *Recreating the Church*, 17-18.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 20.

institutions, and even human happiness,” states Habermas.<sup>142</sup> Such beliefs reveal modernism’s philosophical and epistemological sense of triumphalism, a sensibility espoused and shared by modern mainline churches. However, this triumphalism yields a knotty tension – namely, that the acquisition of knowledge insures progress and happiness and knowledge yields absolute truth. The Christian Church deals in absolute truth. As an institution, it plays the role of gatekeeper and guardian of absolute truth, a galvanizing position that has helped birth postmodern skepticism and critique. Greer argues the idea of absolute truth, though not inherently objectionable, presents challenges. He mentions the problems of “competing absolute truths” and “hidden agendas.”<sup>143</sup> Such disagreements about absolute truth are common among Christians, not to mention discrepancies between and within other religious groups. The question becomes, how can modernism provide a path towards a better world when its epistemological assumptions are seriously divergent? A question not lost on adherents of postmodernism. Even more troubling is the notion of hidden agendas imbedded or situated linguistically. Greer, citing Michael Foucault’s hermeneutics of suspicion as a framework, makes the case that certain usages of language seek to convey or perpetuate philosophical and/or nationalistic hegemony or position. In the case of absolute truth, for instance, the phrase becomes “a code” for *power and control*.<sup>144</sup> God, he argues is another example. It is the kind of word that an individual or community loads with presuppositions, nuances, meanings and symbolism particular to their experience “with

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<sup>142</sup> Jurgen Habermas, “Modernity: An Unfinished Project,” in *the Post-Modern Reader*, ed. Charles Jencks (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 162-163.

<sup>143</sup> Greer, *Mapping Postmodernism*, 15.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

the end result that they stack the deck...to guarantee a desired outcome.”<sup>145</sup> So that the assertion of truth, especially absolute truth, becomes suspect and/or relativized. Such issues became the chinks in mainline Protestant churches, the size of which have been too great to traverse and close utilizing modern means or methods. We have spent time examining the philosophical and, to a lesser degree, theological “undercarriage” of mainline churches to establish their modern perspective. Though modernism does not describe the world’s present era or context, we assert it is the context of church (institutional) life from which the vast majority of mainline congregations embrace and operate. Having set that background in perspective, our attention now turns to the current post-modern environment.

### **Post-Modernism With or Without the Hyphen**

“Post-modern” reveals only that we are in a time that is “after the modern,” says Hamm.<sup>146</sup> Many things have and will be said about the term Post-Modernism but at base it describes the present moment in history that is, in fact, an overlap or nexus between the modern age and these decades characterized by swift sometimes oppositional lines of transition. On the philosophical end, people like Grenz describe it as a rejection of things modern; of a single absolute knowledge leading to Truth; of an objective world.<sup>147</sup> It challenges Cartesian thinking and gravitates towards Heidegger’s position “that the human being is not primarily a thinking self, a subject that engages in cognitive acts;

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<sup>145</sup> Greer, *Mapping Postmodernism*, 15.

<sup>146</sup> Hamm, *Recreating the Church*, 14.

<sup>147</sup> Stanley J. Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996), 1544-1572.

rather, we are above all else beings-in-the-world, enmeshed in social networks.”<sup>148</sup> The work of philosophers such as Nietzsche fueled Post-Modernism’s nascent beginnings.

Grenz notes:

Nietzsche formulated most of the themes that would be essential to the development of the postmodern intellectual climate...he established the course of philosophy toward postmodernism with his thoroughgoing rejection of Enlightenment principles...his rejection of the Enlightenment concept of truth...Nietzsche...calls into question the entire enterprise of rationalistic human knowledge. He claims that what we view as “knowledge” is a purely human creation...He essentially viewed “truth” as a function of the language we employ and hence believed that truth “exists” only within specific linguistic contexts...<sup>149</sup>

Building on the work of Scheiermacher and others, Nietzsche’s contemporary, Wilhem Dilthey, advanced the discussion from hermeneutical standpoint. His was a focus on the impact of experience from which meaning is derived. He “views the human person as a mind-body unity living in interaction with the physical and social environment. He maintains that all experience and hence all thought arise out of this interaction...”<sup>150</sup> Just taking these two intellectuals into account, one can detect subtle postmodern themes emerging. A cadre of late nineteenth and early-to-mid-twentieth century philosophers including as Ludwig Wittgenstein (logical positivism), Martin Heidegger (father of German existentialism) and Hans-Georg Gadamer’s (philosophical hermeneutics), significantly contributed and adds to Post-Modernism’s intellectual underpinning.<sup>151</sup> Among Post-Modernism’s multifaceted layers – intellectual; phenomenological; cultural; art; and architecture – two aspects are of primary concern: its cultural and

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 1602.

<sup>149</sup> Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism*, 1650-1670.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 1865.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 1932-2129.

phenomenological expressions. For it is with these expressions that mainline Protestantism wages the first wave of its battle with Post-Modernism.

Post-Modernism is confusing to many. It is not modernism; it exists after modernism hence its designation: post. There is no argument as to its proper spelling or textual representation. It is rendered as Post-Modernism or postmodernism, without hyphenation and collapsed compound construction. Spelling appears to be a matter of personal preference and grammatical emphasis, as it is sometimes rendered: postmodernism, a spelling which seems to bolster and substantiate the philosophical rumination whether “postmodernity is actually a break with modernity, or merely its continuation [?]”<sup>152</sup> As a phenomenon, postmodernism exhibits the following consistent attributes, characteristics, or conceptual traits. According to Kvale, “[it] does not designate a systematic theory or a comprehensive philosophy, but rather diverse diagnoses and interpretations of the current culture, a depiction of a multitude of interrelated phenomena [*sic*].”<sup>153</sup> Two observations: the first, relates to postmodernism’s proclivity to deconstruct modernism’s theoretical assumptions yet it fails to proffer a systematic schema as replacement. This may be indicative of the reality that postmodernism serves more as a cultural process of reform than replacement. Second, this statement underscores its functionality as hermeneutic, a way of viewing or re-viewing and processing information streaming from the world. Moreover, it “is characterized by a loss of belief in an objective world and an incredulity towards meta-

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<sup>152</sup> Steiner Kvale, “Themes of Postmodernity,” in *The Truth About the Truth: De-Confusing and Re-Constructing the Postmodern World*, ed. Walter Truett Anderson (New York: Tarcher, 1995), 19.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

narratives of legitimation.”<sup>154</sup> Hence, it strikes at the very notion of universality in truth and perception of the world. In postmodernism locality trumps modernism’s appetite for the universal, in the process it relativizes global truths out of distrust and skepticism for authoritarian claims. Greer quotes Allan Bloom’s famous observation that “[t]here is one thing a professor can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes, or says he believes, that truth is relative.”<sup>155</sup> As to relativity, Kvale further presses Habermas’s argument that postmodernity’s ‘delegitimization’ of official meta-narratives generates a “general loss of faith in tradition and authority, with a resulting relativity of values.”<sup>156</sup> He goes on to say:

With the collapse of the universal systems of meaning of meta-narratives, a re-narrativization of the culture takes place, emphasizing communication and the impact of a message upon the audience. There is today an interest in *narratives*, on the telling of stories. In contrast to an extrinsic legitimization through appeal to meta-discourses....”<sup>157</sup>

As stories are told, communication embodies a different reality. Kvale contends the modern connection between “sign and signified is breaking down.”<sup>158</sup> Where words (linguistic signs) had once signaled abstract ideas upon which the world rested and functioned (truth), now “intertextuality” (connections that necessarily build and lead to other connections. Akin to the saying: ‘men don’t write texts, texts write men’) creates relationships between ‘surface’ ideas. Kvale remarks, “The TV series *Miami Vice* may

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>155</sup> Greer, *Mapping Postmodernism*, 13. Allan Bloom’s original title is *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today’s Students* (Simon & Schuster: New York), 1987.

<sup>156</sup> Kvale, “Themes of Postmodernity,” 20.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 24.

refer less to the vice in Miami than to other TV series...The image, the appearance, is everything; the appearance has become the essence.”<sup>159</sup> Connection between and among surface ideas generate a zone of slippage as language no longer carries the authorization of old meta-narratives and meanings. Slippage engenders an attitude of suspicion, “a suspicion of suspicion” and “an openness to the differences and nuances of what appears.”<sup>160</sup> This mindset is significant as it represents much of what mainline congregations deplore about postmodernism. Modernism rests on its ideal of absolute truth; of the observer/object dichotomy; of modernity that promises progress; of natural laws that establish and order science, society, and culture. And as for Christianity, it is modernism’s infrastructure that ironically supports the superstructure called ‘institutional Church’ and its doctrines of faith. As for the postmodern mindset:

“The idea of progress and development, be it of progress of mankind [*sic*] or the individual pilgrim’s progress towards salvation of his or her soul, is out. And attitude of tolerant indifference has replaced the involvement and engagement in the social move-ments and the inner journeys of the 1960s and 1970s.”<sup>161</sup>

In summary, Hamm’s Modern versus Postmodern comparison is presented below in Table 2.<sup>162</sup> Standing in juxtaposition, modernism and postmodernism’s salient distinctions crystalize, revealing their essential connectedness and divergences.

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Kvale, “Themes of Postmodernity,” 24.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>162</sup> Hamm, *Recreating the Church*, 15.

Table 3 – Modernism/Postmodernism Comparison Chart

Modern	Postmodern
Immutable physical laws characterize the universe (Descartes).	Physical relativity characterizes the universe (Einstein)
Linear, rational, symmetrical.	Nonlinear, asymmetrical, many focuses.
Nation states are the building blocks of the world order.	Ethnic groups, mass communications, and the market are the building blocks of the world order.
Office – particularly hierarchical office-grants authority.	Relationships grant authority.
WASP males drive broad social consensus.	No single, dominant, social consensus –great diversity and many voices.
Communication is oratorical, formal, and indirect.	Communication is conversational [read: ‘surface], informal, and direct.
Progress is inevitable.	Progress is possible.

Postmodernism is a worldview with roots deep into the nineteenth century but burst onto the scene as a cultural phenomenon in the late 1960s to early 1970s. Hamm maintains postmodernism began in 1968 as the turbulence of that decade came to a traumatic crescendo. It is that moment “when the WASP males’ cultural dominance was challenged and others began to be heard in their own voices and had to be taken seriously (especially African Americans and women).”<sup>163</sup> He is partially correct as his analysis fails to take into account the confluence of startling events that left American life, in particular, topsy-turvy. On January 30, 1968, America and its South Vietnamese allies were caught off guard by the Viet Cong’s Tet (Chinese New Year) Offensive, after which the United States ramped up its military engagement against the North Vietnamese. Three

<sup>163</sup> Hamm, *Recreating the Church*, 13-14.



months later on April 4, 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated outside the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, TN. And just two short months after the civil rights leader lost his life to a sniper's bullet, the brother of the 35<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, was assassinated. Senator Robert F. Kennedy, presidential candidate, was slain on June 5, 1968 in Los Angeles, CA. 1968 was rife with momentous political, technological (Apollo 7 was the first manned space flight), and cultural turns.<sup>164</sup> Taking these factors into consideration, Hamm's assertion that "[s]ince 1968, there has been no single, dominate, social consensus in the United States,"<sup>165</sup> bears greater perspective and weight.

Charles Jencks, postmodern architect and theorist, cites the actual onset of postmodernism differently. His perspective is worth noting as it captures the broad cultural realization of its effects on society. Jencks pinpoints the moment of modernism's death and postmodernism's dawn as cultural reality to July 15, 1972. On that day in the city of St. Louis, Missouri, the Pruitt-Igoe housing development was demolished. Jencks declared the modern era in architecture ended when those buildings fell.<sup>166</sup> As modernism faded, gone were the presuppositions that once gave it force as identified with the Pruitt-Igoe development: emphases on straight, austere linear designs; cold, dehumanizing functionality; deference to authority; elevation of the universal to the detriment of local experience.<sup>167</sup> In contrast, postmodernism de-systematizes,

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<sup>164</sup> "Historical Events for Year 1968," HistoryOrb.com, <http://www.historyorb.com/events/date/1968> (accessed February 15, 2013).

<sup>165</sup> Hamm, *Recreating the Church*, 14.

<sup>166</sup> Charles Jencks, "What Is Post-Modernism?" in *The Truth About the Truth: De-Confusing and Re-Constructing the Postmodern World*, ed. Walter Truett Anderson (New York: Tarcher, 1995), 26-30.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

deconstructs, decentralizes, and neutralizes. For those reared in a modern paradigm where everything has a label and was neatly boxed, postmodernism does not sit well. Alluding to Kvale, it celebrates the ‘pastiche’, the eclectic use of old and new in all forms and representative of reality as each culture creates it. One must hasten to add this is not patchwork; it is a synthesis, a compromise. Though postmodernism’s moment of inception is debatable, it is obvious significant cultural change occurred during the last decades of the twentieth century.

Perhaps more relevant to religious professionals is Jill M. Hudson’s work, *When Better Isn’t Enough*, which tackles the effects of postmodernism from a pastoral leadership and transformative competency perspective. She acknowledges how postmodernism and secularization shapes culture; thus elucidating our environmental perspective and understanding, helping religious professionals appreciate the enormity of the sea change in motion. She states, “Generation X, born between 1965 and 1980, is the first generation that, en masse, was not taken to church.”<sup>168</sup> Hudson shares a couple contributing reasons: “Their baby-boomer parents turned against organized religion and left the church in droves...[and a] secular culture is no longer friendly to religion in the public school, civic arena, or workplace.”<sup>169</sup> As the modern church paradigm has ended, what has emerged is a quagmire of uncertainty for those who are locked into the old model. Rescue comes with understanding.

Church decline is more prevalent than many church leaders presume. Though a significant problem for churches of various traditions, it is not a mischaracterization to

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<sup>168</sup> Jill M. Hudson, *When Better Isn’t Enough: Evaluation Tools for the 21st-Century Church* (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2004), 15.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-16.

describe it as a mainline Protestant blight.<sup>170</sup> Church growth and attendance in the aggregate (including Catholic categories) is up by 1.05 percent from 2009 to 2010 from 145,838,339 to 147,384,631 according to the National Council of Churches Yearbook for 2011,<sup>171</sup> largely reflecting growth in Catholic circles. The question is: what is it about mainline Protestantism that is so unappealing, turning off Baby Busters and Millennials by the millions? Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn note that decline is a *dynamic* (emphasis mine) as much as it is an organizational attitude or culture. All organizations have a culture or ways in which they realize their values and it is the role and responsibility of executive management to make sagacious use of every bit of data to improve upon that culture.<sup>172</sup> Perhaps traditional religious authorities (leadership) do not command the respect and regard or place in the world they once did a half century ago as they reflect the declining old model? “Most churches are operating almost exactly the same as they did in the 70s and therefore people have difficulty identifying with today’s church...Of course this also makes people associate outdated methods with the message [sic],”<sup>173</sup> says Allen McGraw. People have changed; so, too, their expectations of churches. Admittedly, some people have no expectations at all of any religious body. This is the postmodern environment: secularized and postmodern. Yet mainline Protestant leadership and congregations, by and large, have failed to assess, recognize,

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<sup>170</sup> Eileen Linder, *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches 2010* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010).

<sup>171</sup> National Council of Churches of Christ in USA, *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches 2011* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2011).

<sup>172</sup> Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework*, 3 ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 1-26.

<sup>173</sup> Allen McGraw, “The Condition of the Church in America – Key Statistics,” The MethodistCorner.com, <http://www.methodistcorner.net/2008/01/02/the-condition-of-the-church-in-america-key-statistics/> (accessed December 21, 2011).

keep up and thoroughly engage with it in direct opposition to the heart of their own faith credo – mission! And have done so at their peril.

### **Leadership and Transformation Models**

There is not a dearth of information on leadership and change management. In fact, the opposite is more reflective of reality: there is an astonishing profusion of such materials. A quick Amazon.com query on the topic of leadership yields 109,537 books on the subject and a corresponding search on change management yields 83,230 hits to date! Obviously, information is not the issue. Given all these resources in the face of American Protestantism's biggest historical challenge, the central issue is best phrased in the form a question: What lessons and values can mainline Protestant congregations glean from this material? In particular, what can be learned from change (transformational) management theory and literature that can provide systematic response to the challenge postmodern churches face? The balance of this chapter will examine possible responses to this question.

Style or type of leadership is the first issue to address. Gary L. McIntosh argues that a church requires different types of professional leadership for each of its life stages. Quoting David O. Moberg's research he shares, "Study of many churches reveals a typical pattern through which they pass as they emerge, grow, decline, and ultimately die. Each recurrent growth cycle of stability, experimentation, and integration may be described as following five stages."<sup>174</sup> Moberg's five stages are "incipient organization, formal organization, maximum efficiency, institutional stage, and integration."<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Gary L. McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level: What Got You Here Won't Get You There* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009), 26.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

McIntosh restates and reformulates the stages as the basis for his book, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level: What Got You Here Won't Get You There*. He treats each stage as a chapter in the book: “emerging church, growing church, consolidating church, declining church, and dying church.”<sup>176</sup> Every religious entity experiences a birth point, incline, plateau, decline, and eventual death. McIntosh makes the argument that for each stage of life, a church requires a different kind of leader, as most individuals are near incapable of transforming to meet the changing institutional demands of a church. He states, “it takes uncommon ability to adjust one’s leadership style to fit the changing needs of a congregation as it travels along its life cycle.”<sup>177</sup> In chapter 8, “Leading through the Stages,” he lists five typologies of pastoral leaders: 1) Catalyzer – “...starts a group from scratch, attracting people and resources...”; 2) Organizer – “...assembles pieces into an orderly organization that maximizes resources...”; 3) Operator – “...keeps an organization going by improving its general procedures and systems...”; 4) Reorganizer – “...brings turnaround strategies to bear on an organization that is in decline...”; 5) Super Reorganizer – “...brings radical changes to a church that result in a total rebirth of the congregation.”<sup>178</sup> Though typology aids in analysis, caution dictates that typology not function as organizational protocol or call for strategic action. Nowhere in his discussion does he touch on the intangible yet essential spiritual leadership qualities (e.g., charismata; vision; galvanizing spirituality). McIntosh’s mindset betrays his ties to modern thought rather than a new approach to a postmodern problem. Hamm’s argument regarding installation services is exemplary here as McIntosh’s proves his

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<sup>176</sup> For a fuller discussion on these stages, see Appendix F.

<sup>177</sup> McIntosh, *Taking Your Church*, 89.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 87-95.

point. Professional ministry serves the machine. It must also be noted that given the abundance of change management and leadership development available, contradictory arguments will arise. That being said, McIntosh's work, though highly valuable for its analytics; falls short in providing church leaders viable options for exploring professional development enhancements as their churches experience organizational life. McIntosh's schema cannot engage Quinn's fundamental state of leadership that transforms individuals to meet new personal and professional challenges, and it fails the core message (the Good News) of Christianity, that transformation is not only possible but achievable. In the words of Robert E. Quinn, too many have "chosen short term personal survival" in favor of longer-term stability. Because of uncertainty many leaders determine to just hold on and hold out in lieu of a personal strategic goal or plan. As a result, leaders practice a form of avoidism, addressing mere technological concerns—that is, tinkering with organizational structure—which amounts to "superficial changes," a failure to make any "[significant] change in our basic structures and processes."<sup>179</sup> Different kinds of tools and an expanded worldview are needed for the new postmodern church reality. It begins with leaders and congregations learning from change literature that transformation of its leadership is possible. Stated at a personal level, it is necessary for a leader to *know* herself or himself, to be willing to move beyond the zone of comfort and re-experience transformation.

Secondly, learn the lesson of knowing one's environment. This is a common corporate practice. Successful businesses get that way and grow by knowing and exploiting the needs and demands of their clientele. This *practice* holds true whether the

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<sup>179</sup> Quinn, *Building the Bridge*, 16.

discussion entails implementing new metrics and analytics to management methodologies to approaches for handling corporate change initiatives to launch a new product/service or merger. In contrast, modern mainline Protestant church leadership approach in relation to its environment has been to bemoan or disparage its community (and sometimes its adherents), placing the locus of blame for its agonizing demise squarely upon spiritual dysfunctionality of communities; competition with social activities; the lack of prayer in schools; declining state of Christian religiosity or sometimes “culture wars” when the problem is in actuality the culmination of a “perfect storm” of events epitomized by postmodernism.<sup>180</sup> Blame is not a game that can be won. The rules of society have changed and, like the business sector, adroit understanding of one’s setting is essential to play the new game. Bob Farr and Kay Kotan in *Renovate or Die: 10 Ways to Focus Your Church on Mission* say “One of the first things every pastor and every leader must do is gain an understanding of their present reality. You must get to know your context if you ever want your church to be vital and alive. Context is everything. You have heard it said, “All politics are local. It’s also true for churches. All churches are local.”<sup>181</sup> Knowing one’s community is more than spouting local demographic reports with command – although knowing demographics helps one understand “the who” of community make up. Knowing one’s context entails “the who” and “the what” of community life, understanding the needs, wants, and demands of potential “clientele,” to borrow a term from business. To know one’s context is to understand the reasons why the idea of church is anachronistic to some (read: modern church model) and thoughtfully devise strategies

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<sup>180</sup> Hamm, *Recreating the Church*, chapters 3-7.

<sup>181</sup> Bob Farr and Kay L. Kotan, *Renovate or Die: 10 Ways to Focus Your Church On Mission* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2011), 390.

for creating a local church environment that is conducive for congregational renewal leading to congregational transformation. There is an old, old argument that to adopt new methods is to jettison old beliefs. Such thinking is modern and, in our estimation, shows little faith in Christianity's genius to communicate its message irrespective of mode of cultural conveyance. Citing Farr and Kotan's argument, if Walmart, being a global business, can learn to localize its stores to reflect their surrounding communities, tapping into the unique character of each, "[d]ynamic, vital churches" should find ways of doing likewise.<sup>182</sup>

Several personal transformation resources are available for religious leaders, most of which are grounded in psychological and leadership development theory and corroborated via empirical studies. Evidence suggests executive management in particular and mid-level and line staff in general are capable of extraordinary feats of transformation once the value of self-redefining first – prior to any system wide change effort - is thoroughly comprehended (Quinn's *Building the Bridge As You Walk on It* and *Deep Change* are prime examples). Michael Fullan's *Change Leader: Learning to Do What Matters Most* introduces a third, viable step for leaders, which is not undervaluing practice and overvaluing written materials. Fullan position presupposes personal transformation having taken place, as he details the substance of change leadership - *practice*.

The more my colleagues and I grappled with change challenges, the more I realized that the most effective leaders use practice as their fertile learning ground. They never go from theory to practice or research evidence to application. They do it the other way around: they try to figure out what's working, what could be working better, and *then* look into how research and theory might help.

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<sup>182</sup> Farr and Kotan, *Renovate or Die*, 390.



During this same period, a multibillion-dollar enterprise has burgeoned that is based on the promise of giving advice to leaders so that they can become more effective. The best leaders, as I said, take this advice with a grain of salt. Others, more needy, fall for it and try to figure out how to apply it. It doesn't work. It can't work, because these leaders are looking for answers in the wrong places. You can't find the answers outside yourself-you have to start inside and look for the best external connections to further develop your own thinking and action.<sup>183</sup>

I have to admit, upon first reading his assertion struck me as preposterous. It seemed the most egregious mismanagement to plunge ahead into uncharted territory, what Quinn calls "walking naked into the land of uncertainty,"<sup>184</sup> without adequate proper preparation through study and reflection. Is Fullan's an argument against the time honored custom of action and reflection? Then the thought presented itself: "Lose the modern preconceptions." He is proffering that to enter the state of realm of change (transformational) leader; one executes practice by having faith in self first. Fullan continues:

The best ideas are potentially right under our noses. You need to start with your own work, see how others in similar situations move forward, and create your own action plan using research and theory where they may help. In other words, use research and theory *selectively* in the service of practice. Research, theory, and management books are at best an input; at worst they are misleading, and great timewasters."<sup>185</sup>

Interesting statement given Fullan's is a book on management! He says as much.<sup>186</sup> Yet his point is nonetheless relevant. Fullan's approach is about "...using your brain before it's too late...[and] the wise practitioner rather than the abstract theorist; the

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<sup>183</sup> Fullan, *Change Leader*, xii.

<sup>184</sup> Quinn, *Deep Change*, chapter 1.

<sup>185</sup> Fullan, *Change Leader*, xii.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, xiii.

reflective doer, not the smart operator....”<sup>187</sup> Even more striking, to come to terms with ‘simplicity’. That is, meeting change not just a matter of changing leaders or revamping programs. It is the hard work of communicating vision, anticipating resistance points, creating a new congregational culture and taking risks: “change is both simple and complex.”<sup>188</sup> Gordon Dragt’s comments in *One Foot Planted in the Center, the Other Dangling Off the Edge* verify this. His short book functions as a quasi-handbook on transformation strategies. He shares fragments of his personal philosophy mingled with strategy examples based on his experience at Collegiate Marble Church in New York, New York scattered throughout. Use of pithy statements such as, “Transformational, adaptive leadership is intentional...” and “just say yes, how simple is that?”<sup>189</sup> Add to the book’s accessibility but one would do well to consider it as one person’s story and not a model. It illustrates the fact that transformational efforts require simplicity. It requires purposeful intentionality, practice. He states, “If decisions for new life are not intentional and purposeful, a church will simply continue to be stuck or dysfunctional or decline.”<sup>190</sup> Dragt’s perspective which embraces a leadership ethic of active experimentation coincides with Fullan’s points (above) and Farr and Kotan’s discussion of what they term “mix it in your own sauce.”<sup>191</sup> Of value here is the marshaling self-trust along with self-knowledge. The common temptation for leaders in dysfunctional or declining settings is

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<sup>187</sup> Fullan, *Change Leader*, xiii.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>189</sup> Gordon R. Dragt, *One Foot Planted in the Center, the Other Dangling Off the Edge: How Intentional Leadership Can Transform Your Church* (Salt Lake City, UT: American Book Publishing, 2009), 17, 37.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>191</sup> Farr and Kotan, *Renovate or Die*, 399.

that of mimicry (see Fullan's statement on leaders who are "more needy" above): i.e., apply models devised elsewhere wholesale onto one's congregation/organization. Church contexts are not identical replicas, and no matter how similar congregations may appear on the surface method adoption should not be confused with adaptive strategies (more on adaptive change below). Such short-sightedness is the cause of much disillusionment and disappoint.

The issue of practice leads to the subject of authority: Whose leadership model ought churches emulate? As has been the case for decades, modern churches have turned to secular theories and models, deeming them more "scientific" and, ipso facto, authoritative and effective for institutional church life. Ronald Rojas and John Alvares express:

A majority of leadership theories have been originating primarily from the observation of social behaviors, and until recently, with a minimal consideration to spiritual realities. In other words, most of what we know about leadership today was developed on the basis of an incomplete human foundation [postmodernism speaking?], by observing the interactions of power and influence among individuals and groups, but without consideration for the spiritual realities.

And,

Yet despite...appeal that leadership become an 'all embracing activity of human endeavor,' the spiritual dimension of the person is excluded for the leadership models. It seems persuasive that as long as the *spiritual component* is excluded from the evolution of leadership models, something crucial to our understanding of the person and leaders remains unaddressed.

Another, more recent, demonstration of the effects of a leadership without the spiritual dimension of the person is the work by Ian Mitroff and Elizabeth Denton. They observe:

We believe that today's organizations are impoverished spiritually, and that many of their most important problems are due to this

impoverishment. In other words, today's organizations are suffering from a deep, spiritual emptiness....<sup>192</sup>

Not surprisingly, Rojas and Alvarez state the obvious: churches' over-reliance on secular models has nearly bled dry the possibility of gifted transformational leadership in the institutional church. They do argue that the remedy is to bring both spirituality and religion back to the Church, so to speak. Fear and suspicion of organized religion drove people away from churches and other houses of worship. However, the very purpose for the Church's existence is engagement, engaging people in transformative ways. If the Church fails to understand the dynamics which power and drive the communities of which it is part then it becomes an irrelevant institution; an unconnected religious, vestigial phenomenon of days past. The Church truly becomes *Religulous* in the Bill Maher sense of the word.<sup>193</sup> Yet peoples' sense of spirituality survives. Institutional

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<sup>192</sup> Ronald Rojas and John Alvarez, *The Challenges of Pastoral Leadership: Concepts and Practice* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2012), 20, 24, 25.

<sup>193</sup> Bill Maher, *Religulous*, CinemaNow, directed by Larry Charles (publication place: Thousand Words, LLC, 2008), [https://www.cinemanow.com/MediaManager\\_rq.aspx](https://www.cinemanow.com/MediaManager_rq.aspx) (accessed November 22, 2011).

In 2008, Bill Maher, political humorist/satirist and avowed agnostic, released *Religulous*, the irreverent documentary of his quest to probe the veracity of one of society's cultural icons: religion. Rather than simply inquiring into people's motivations for practicing faith or exploring the various expressions of religious practice; his mission was to discredit, demystify, and debunk; to spread the seeds of doubt in the fields of faith practice. As he said, "I'm selling doubt, not certainty. That's what the other guys (insert: religious leaders) are selling." Despite its unapologetic tone, Maher touches on several salient points related to the disconnection between religion (all world religions) and real life concerns and experiences of people. Maher's analyses are often point on in regard to religion's misuse for personal or national gain and reading scripture out of context to support spurious, if not irrational arguments of varying kinds. Perhaps the most powerful moments in the film come as Maher's scriptural proficiency and hermeneutical skills far outstrip those of the religious adherent he interviews. As a result, it is not so much the fact that religion comes out as a debunked notion holding on long past its date with history's scrap heap, as the fact that the faith adherents he interviews are exposed as people who have thought very little or deeply about the faith they espouse. Even more significantly, many adherents come across as acolytes desperately holding onto faith (primarily Christian) with little idea of its larger history or relevancy beyond immediate benefits, hackneyed catch phrases, and misplaced religious fervor, in spite of the historic revelations of the Enlightenment. This film functions as an expose, bringing to question the dogged devotion of those who, against Maher's line of reason, seek the favor of a god who, at best, does not exist; or, at worst, offers, in Bonhofferian terms, "cheap grace" by granting material wants without demanding true discipleship. In Maher's terms, the very idea - people and institution - is '*Religulous*.'

decline rather being the death blow to American Protestantism may very well be its salvation. Mainline denomination churches, as modern institutions, seem imploding under their own weight (modern presuppositions; worldview; “baggage” all). Is it possible that an act of God would move generations of people out of harm’s way before the “temple” collapse? Saving and providing opportunity for the “living Church” at its core to transform the dysfunctional, if not, dying aspects of the institution? This tact would move congregational renewal efforts beyond mere recognition of the “absence of the spirit” and the reactionary inclination to “Christianize” secular models”<sup>194</sup> for Church use towards authentic transformation that seeks to affect suppositions that support all worldview models. A final observation regarding leadership practice: For church-based change leadership to thrive, professional and lay leaders alike must recognize the distinction between managing and leading.

The modern model makes managers of its church professionals, individuals whose purpose is to “serve the machine,” per Hamm. John P. Kotter remarks, “Management is a set of processes that can keep a complicated system of people and technology running smoothly. The most important aspects of management include planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, controlling, and problem solving.”<sup>195</sup> From the religious point of view, to “chaplain” the entire church life enterprise (No disparagement intended towards those who serve in institutions including the United States Military). Kotter’s point creates a necessary tension requiring reflection. According to Kotter, “Leadership is a set of processes that creates organizations in the first place or adapts

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<sup>194</sup> Rojas and Alvarez, *Challenges of Pastoral Leadership*, 25.

<sup>195</sup> Kotter, *Leading Change*, 440-442.

them to significantly changing circumstances. Leadership defines what the future should look like, aligns people with that vision, and inspires them to make it happen despite the obstacles.”<sup>196</sup> An abbreviated table of management/leadership attributes compiled by Kotter is listed below to aid comparison.<sup>197</sup>

Table 4 – Kotter’s Management versus Leadership Comparison

Management	Leadership
<b>Planning and Budgeting</b>	Establishing Direction
<b>Organizing and staffing</b>	Aligning People
<b>Controlling and Problem Solving</b>	Motivating and Inspiring
<b>Produces a Degree of Predictability</b>	Produces Change

Leadership and management are the result of processes, per Kotter. As much as stellar leadership may be the result of inborn talent, training, and instinct; the role of supportive organizational structures which facilitate it must not be underestimated (for example see Dragt, chapter 7, “Basic Church Mathematics”). Successful transformational leadership builds in structure and culture that supports and encourages innovation. Kotter goes on to emphasize “...successful transformation is 70 to 90 percent leadership and only 10 to 30 percent management. Yet for historical reasons, many organizations today don’t have much leadership. And almost everyone thinks about the problem [organizational malaise or church decline] as one of *managing* change.”<sup>198</sup> To borrow a

<sup>196</sup> Kotter, *Leading Change*, 442-444.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 444.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., 435-446.

phrase from Kotter, ours is an “over managed, under led” church culture.<sup>199</sup> What is needed is a reevaluation of values - a process of values clarification - that encourages a climate of transformation and the leaders who will guide it.

Reevaluation of values is a thing that is easier said than done. This is true of all organizations, including churches. Yet for congregations suffering the throes of decline, dysfunction, and pending death, reevaluation is the precursor to taking the first, therapeutic, step of a long journey towards congregational resurrection. Resurrection is not just for people anymore! A common postmodern motif is the Western world’s inability to critically examine itself; i.e., the impact of its hegemony and cultural hubris on the rest of the world and/or the validity of political, economic, and military criticism concerning its policies. The same holds true for the Western Church, Catholic and Protestant. It is conceivable that such a symbiotic embrace of modern ideals exists that theological and philosophical strands, which has feed the life line of Church doctrine and credo for centuries, are near indistinguishable today. To question the authority of the Church is to question God as to challenge American hegemony is to challenge “manifest destiny” is all its modern permutations. American Christianity, in some parts of the nation, has become a blend du jour of civil religion. Would I go as far as to assert that Western theology has difficulty critiquing itself? Yes and no, is my answer. Yes, as some quarters within American Protestantism (and the large Church) bristle at the very notion that postmodernism – and the secular culture that seems to thrive under its influence - questions ideals such as absolute truth, ultimate authority and exclusivity among others. No, as more and more pastors, church leaders, and others who deeply care for the

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<sup>199</sup> Kotter, *Leading Change*, 467.

Christian Church, wrestle with valid critics and faith commitments. Robert Brewer is one who seems to wrestle. It is evident in his critique of "...theologians [who] seem to celebrate the end of the exclusivity of Christianity and welcome pluralistic ideologies into the fold of Christianity with open arms,"<sup>200</sup> a position with which he is obviously quite dissatisfied. Though in chapter 11 of his book, *Postmodernism: What You Should Know and Do About It*, he does find common ground with some theologians who are for intentional dialogue where faith commitments are not sacrificed in the interest of reforming what is thought as the nonnegotiable tenets of historic Christianity.<sup>201</sup> Brewer goes to some effort to highlight that "postmodernists are able to live with these types of contradictions...."<sup>202</sup> He refers to features of which we have spoken: relativism, pluralism, no absolute truth, et cetera. Yet he fails to enounce suppositional contradictions inherent within a Christian worldview. I cite Brewer to underscore an earlier point on congruency; namely, the congruency of values in as much as is possible. It is incumbent of churches, in the face of secularism and postmodern influences, to maintain core values; and it behooves each local congregation to define those values that are important and representative of it, not simply denigrate and demonize its critics in strong-arm fashion.

### **Models and Methodologies**

In 1976 Paul W. Pruyser's book *The Minister as Diagnostician* was released. In it he expounds the idea of pastors functioning as emotional diagnosticians of their

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<sup>200</sup> R. Brewer, *Postmodernism: What You Should Know and Do About It* (Grand Rapids, MI: iUniverse, 2002), 57.

<sup>201</sup> Brewer, *Postmodernism*, chapter 11.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 73.



congregations, expanding their range from only spiritual applications.<sup>203</sup> His book reflects a popular therapeutic model of pastoral care the last half of the 20th century when many seminaries trained their students to diagnose individual and group behavior utilizing psychotherapeutic and counseling methods, a needed advancement in pastoral ministry. The 21st century poses its own challenges, not the least of which is learning to negotiate and navigate the rivers of constant change. Such frequency of change requires church leaders to develop and employ new diagnostic tools and metrics. As has been argued, churches, in general, have not been very responsive to their changing environment, expecting society to re-conform to its traditional expectations. Alas, the world has changed forever. Churches cannot afford to live, *organizationally* speaking, decades behind failing to adjust operational thinking, ministries, and vision. Of course, there are those who argue that the church ought not to change because the world around it has (see Brewer). Counter arguments hinge on such premises as churches are keepers of tradition; values; faith and practices that have held meaning for millennia. To change now is compromise in the pejorative sense, risking faith dilution at best and syncretism at worst, with, no less, a culture sliding into the morass of moral laxity and turpitude. For adherents of modern traditionalism, change is tantamount to recanting the faith and becoming apostate. Modern traditionalists perceive efforts of some churches to "*modernize*" administration, contemporize worship as expressions of capitulation to some nefarious zeitgeist determined to derail Christianity. Such sentiments may fuel the counter development of house churches across the nation, a movement away from the

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<sup>203</sup> Paul W. Pruyser, *The Minister as Diagnostician: Personal Problems in Pastoral Perspective* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1976).

modern notions of highly professionalized, compartmentalized, worship contexts designed to yield higher efficiencies and value to worshippers (consumers!).

*The Minister As Diagnostician* is important because it encouraged pastors to link spiritual formation with personal development and integration issues; to not only view disruptive behavior as sinful or deliberate but to look deeper; expose hidden systems which operate in a church context as a family therapist in a familial context. (The bifurcating effect of theological education must be noted here, however, as it often worked to reinforce a mind versus spirit dichotomy. One could become a pastor of the spiritual realm or a pastor of administration, an effect of modernism). Pruyser's contribution is invaluable, and represents a point of departure for assessing transformation models. The minister today must acquire diagnostic skills for a postmodern context. Determine presenting contextual symptomology and determine the best course of treatment for her or his particular setting. Heifetz and Linsky present a detailed paradigm designed to aid the diagnostic process (See *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, pages 74-76).

It is no instance of hyperbole or embellishment to state there is an overwhelming raft of change management models from which to choose. However, choosing a model is not the first step of diagnosis. Coming to a point of *contextual admission* is. The religious professional encounters mounting instances of personal and professional dissatisfaction, which may be the outgrowth of working in modern environs such as churches (organizations) – church as machines (discussed above). McIntosh presents in narrative format an excellent portrayal of the kinds of frustrations, feelings of professional embarrassment and blame, and disillusionment with governance of church life and

degradation of personal worth leaders encounter and internalize in dysfunctional and declining settings.<sup>204</sup> Such feelings are symptomatic of organizational incongruences that often run unimpeded under the auspices of church administration. Though organizational (church) life is complex, tedious, and stressful, such being the constant state and din of affairs is not normative. Burn-out is indicative of both personal and institutional imbalances. Weigh in the additional pressures of community change, secularism, and family life only serve to exacerbate the situation. Contextual admission is the process of coming to terms of one's situation not being normative. Once that admission is made, a variety of choices present themselves: a) working harder in attempt to rectify the situation; b) maintaining the status quo – i.e., 'don't rock the boat'; closing all potential exit points (resignation) and conscientiously dealing with the situation (entering the fundamental state of leadership); many of these options Quinn discusses in his books. Leaving contextual admission phase one enters the *hunter/gatherer* modality. That is, the search for any information concerning one's current reality and issues in the form of anecdotes from colleagues and case studies in the written record; compilation of that data which is prepared and processed for later analysis. As adopting any one change initiative at this stage may prove counter-productive since one must determine "Is the success you observe [i.e., in the data] brought about by the practice you seek to emulate...[and] What are the downsides and disadvantages of the practice, even if a good one?"<sup>205</sup> After entering the analysis phase, attention can center in on questions of practicality such as,

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<sup>204</sup> McIntosh, *Taking Your Church*, chapter 1.

<sup>205</sup> Michael Fullan, *The Six Secrets of Change: What the Best Leaders Do to Help Their Organizations Survive and Thrive* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 16.

“Why is a particular practice linked to performance improvement?”<sup>206</sup> Acquisition of potential models is crucial, generating a pool from which viable solutions may arise. The *pre-assessment* phase is the time for comparison study of data, interviews, and possible models before narrowing down model selections to a cadre of two or three from which to work. (Ironically, this process was employed before learning of the existence of a similar strategy called “resist the leap to action” articulated by Heifetz and Linsky.)<sup>207</sup> The following models were primary theoretical contenders for our demonstration project and a brief explanation is proffered, along with a rationale for our methodology.

Having surveyed several books on what the business sector refers to as change management; our candidates for further analysis were *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* by Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky; *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey* by Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James H. Furr; *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches* by Christian A. Schwarz; *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard* by Chip and Dan Heath; *7 Practices of Effective Ministry* by Andy Stanley, Reggie Joiner and Lane Jones; and inclusion of one book from psychology/counseling, *Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling: An Effective Short-Term Approach for Getting People Back on Track* by Charles Allen Kollar. One can readily tell more than two or three sources made our pre-assessment. These are the resources which sparked our interest and seemed to resonate with the particularities evident in our context and current reality. After closer inspection, elimination of *Natural Church Development*

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<sup>206</sup> Fullan, *The Six Secrets of Change*, 16.

<sup>207</sup> Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky, *Leadership On the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2002), 44.

came rapidly for two reasons: 1) it is dense on theory and data (overly so); and 2) presents as difficult to implement at a practical level. It's a good tool but very difficult to monitor and maintain. That left five candidates. *7 Practices of Effective Ministry* was highly appealing but it is a resource for building ministry teams, not a potential schema for congregational transformation. Harkening back to Fullan, utilization of it would amount to a program masquerading as a transformation initiative. That left four candidates, all four of which have been synthesized to support the practice of transformation as implemented in our setting, at the heart of which, ironically, is *Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling*.

Experience and research literature indicates wholesale adoption of any one paradigm is not a guarantee of transformation success. The control of variables from one community and congregation, though documentable, are not easily managed. Further, to assume that the Church can be fully brought under human control is the epitome of hubris. The saying, 'God has the last word,' is quite common within the Christian community as is quite apropos here. Our intent is not to fully adopt but to adapt the best of two or three paradigms to create a culture of change that work in our setting. Solution-focused theory has become the core of our emerging paradigm. Kollar states it this way,

Whether the counselor uses psychological theories and methods or the approach of admonishing from the authority of Scripture, either way the paradigm is centered squarely on the problem. This is what I call a *problem-focused paradigm*. This is the very reason the counselee has come for counseling. He is so focused on his problem that it is affecting him negatively. So what do we do as counselors? We usually focus squarely on the problem! We are going to help him get to the root of his problem no matter how hard it is or how long it takes! Is there a better way? For years Disney cartoonists have used a concept called *imagineering* to assist them in creating their wonderful movies. They carefully visualize their outcome, a perfect cartoon. We could view this as a "problem-free" cartoon. When the artist is creating this perfect cartoon,

what will he be doing first? What next? And so on, one frame at a time. Imagineering is a paradigm buster. When we visualize the outcome first, we become *solution-focused* rather than problem-focused. *The outcome dictates the process, rather than the process dictating the outcome.*<sup>208</sup>

Eureka! I thought. That which drives transformation is not plans or well-designed models. It is vision, something of which the material constantly speaks and experience has borne true. But this is not vision casting – devising a master plan, so to speak. It is imagining individual solutions that take focus off dysfunction, decline, and other negativity – those things to which the mind constantly returns. Stated another way, it is deciding which behaviors to change and how to do it. How to visualize vision? That is something that a congregation suffering from self-identity issues, feeling disempowered and overwhelmed can do. Visualize vision by deciding which behaviors for the next three months, or six months, and so on to change and pursue.

*The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* became the next point of focus. Heifetz and Linsky's strategies help shape communications and structuring strategic planning. The compact definition of adaptive leadership "is the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive."<sup>209</sup> A more involved description is found on Cambridge Leadership Associates' website: "Adaptive leadership is a practical leadership framework that helps individuals and organizations adapt and thrive in challenging environments. It is being able, both individually and collectively, to take on the gradual but meaningful process of adaptation. It is about diagnosing the essential from the expendable and

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<sup>208</sup> Charles Allen Kollar, *Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling: an Effective Short-Term Approach for Getting People Back On Track* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 17.

<sup>209</sup> Heifetz and Linsky, *Leadership On the Line*, 14.

bringing about a real challenge to the status quo.”<sup>210</sup> Adaptive Leadership provides a track or “framework” that articulates the dynamics of change and the crisis change produces, and strategies for surveying one’s context, communicating organizational “urgency,” and providing safe behaviors designed to impact superficial programmatic concerns, while creating space and time for addressing deep-seated, cultural-based paradigms. The differences between “technical problems” and “adaptive challenges” have been quite useful, for instance. “Adaptive challenges can only be addressed through changes in people’s priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties.”<sup>211</sup> This is the deep-seated work of cultural change mentioned above. “Technical problems” are just that. Problems - thorny they may be - that require specific technical talent and skills to solve. Persons with task oriented proclivities often relish such opportunities, especially given the chance to assist their congregation. The more process-oriented gravitates to adaptive challenges such devising strategies planning to modify cultural change. As Heifetz and Linsky note, technical and adaptive challenged are not so easily separated, as “...sorting through an adaptive challenge takes time and reflection.”<sup>212</sup> It is more the case that they are blended or “intertwined.”<sup>213</sup> Adaptive leadership also is an “all hands on deck” approach’, in that it is a bottom up rather than top down approach to creating change. Again, it is important to allow Heifetz and Linsky to speak: “Because the problem lies with people, the solution lies with them, too. So the work of addressing an adaptive challenge must be done by the people connected to the problem. And those in authority must mobilize people to do this

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<sup>210</sup> “CLA Adapt and Thrive in Challenging Environments,” CLA, [http://www.cambridge-leadership.com/index.php/adaptive\\_leadership/](http://www.cambridge-leadership.com/index.php/adaptive_leadership/) (accessed June 15, 2011).

<sup>211</sup> Heifetz and Linsky, *Leadership On the Line*, 19.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., 19.

hard work rather than try to solve the problem for them.”<sup>214</sup> In as much as Adaptive Leadership provides practical traction for congregants, behavioral based strategies provide ideas for turning complex change initiatives into manageable components as exemplified by Chip and Dan Heath.

*Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard*, is not a guide or theoretic treatise on enacting change. It marries the analytical/bottom up, individual activism of Adaptive Leadership with the Solution-Focused intentionality of Kollar. Interestingly, the Heaths discuss solution-focused methodology though not by that terminology. They call it “find the bright spots.”

To pursue bright spots is to ask the question ‘What’s working, and how can we do more of it?’ Sounds simple, doesn’t it? Yet, in the real world, this obvious question is almost never asked. Instead, the question we ask is more problem focused: ‘What’s broken, and how do we fix it?’<sup>215</sup>

*Switch* is about scripting behaviors and action, while recognizing the dynamics that motivate and move people towards change. As informative as *Natural Church Development*, *7 Practices of Effective Ministry and Leading Congregational Change* are, theory, charts, tables, and graphs of paradigm changes do not motivate. Pure information is a poor motivator. If information alone could change people, the United States would enjoy 100% smoking cessation rates. Fewer Americans would lose their health to metabolic diseases easily controlled and rectified by exercise and reasonable healthy diets. The need for congregational change falls into a similar behavioral category as many health (and politically) related behavior categories. The Heath brothers refer to John Kotter’s and Dan Cohen’s observation in this regard in their book in *The Heart of*

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<sup>214</sup> Heifetz and Linsky, *Leadership On the Line*, 74.

<sup>215</sup> Chip Heath and Dan Heath, *Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard* (New York: Crown Business, 2010), 45.



*Change*: Kotter and Cohen say that most people think change happens in this order:

ANALYZE-THINK-CHANGE. You analyze, then you think, and then you change.<sup>216</sup>

In other words, disambiguation of behavior, not information, is the solution. Per Dan and Chip Heath, “Ambiguity is the enemy. Any successful change requires a translation of ambiguous goals into concrete behaviors. In short, to make a switch, you need to *script* the critical moves.”<sup>217</sup> Scripting the moves divides into three easily implementable behavior categories: “Direct the Rider,” which is to direct the conscious mind with “bright spots” and giving reasons to move towards a larger vision. “Motivate the Elephant,” which is to connect people’s emotions positively to a goal that gradually advances the group towards the stated vision (something they call “shrink the change”). And “Shape the Path,” which is where the full force of imagineering comes in: creatively focusing resources on the desired outcome.<sup>218</sup> Anticipating problems and devising appropriate solutions. Dragt call this, “I can smell a plateau coming.”<sup>219</sup> In short, changing behavior is the key for enacting change leading to transformation.

*Leading Congregational Change*, though highly informative, seem inefficient as a congregational leadership tool for enacting change. Similar to *Natural Church Development*, it is plagued with the problem of great information/low motivation factor. Fortunately, the book has a handbook which distills concepts into useable practices, sufficient to motivate most any one’s elephant (Heaths). It is for this reason, this resources is a strategic component of our project. Essentially, this is a leadership manual,

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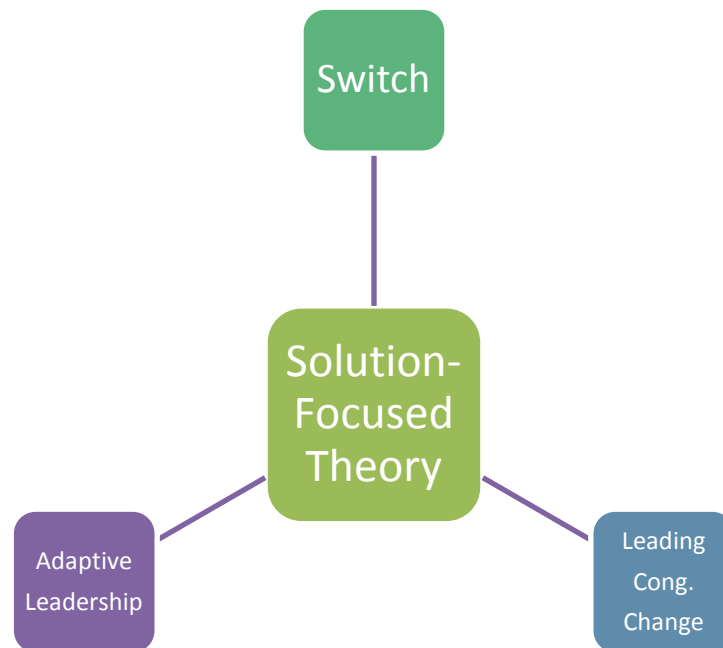
<sup>216</sup> Heath, *Switch*, 106.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., 54, 55.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Dragt, *One Foot Planted in the Center*, 49.

created by practicing church professionals for professionals in communities experiencing change. Herrington et al. describe the role of transformational leadership as one of 1) revitalizing worship; 2) extending the state of grace (pastoral care); 3) mission focus; 4) experiential community; 5) spiritual formation.<sup>220</sup> Their conversation on spiritual and relational vitality is extremely helpful as evaluative tools, and serves as a powerful insight into congregational self-image.



**Figure 4 – Transformation Relational Matrix for Greenwood Baptist Church**

Figure 4 represents our methodology for implementing an initiative of transformation. Our practice (at pastoral and congregational leaders' levels) currently entails issue/challenge assessment then and deciding if the proper course of action involves congregation-based or leadership group solutions. Pastoral leadership actively

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<sup>220</sup> Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James Harold Furr, *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 19-26.

works to model and encourage behaviors that exemplify the congregational culture resonate with our emerging vision. Congregational leaders meet every six to eight weeks to worship, clarify values, and build collegiality. Congregants, as participants of ministry groups or as individuals, are encouraged to solve issues. The next phase of the extended strategic transformation initiative entails congregation-wide values clarification sessions, mission statement revision, and church reorganization including establishment of a Christian preschool school.

## **CHAPTER FOUR IDENTITY THEORY**

“People know the structural categories and relationships, and act in accordance with that knowledge.” Stets and Burke, *Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory*

The purview and permutations of identity theory, first articulated by Erik H. Erikson in his seminal work, *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, has long been the domain of psychologists and, as of recent years, sociologists. Erikson’s research and subsequent findings demarcate the ground from which broader theories of self, as relates to aspects of cognitive and psychological development in children, emerge and upon which theoretical refinements and new veins of research into societal identities, group identities, and personal formation rests. Studies in the aforementioned fields from Marcia’s *Four Identity Status* (1968) to Bandura’s *Social Learning Theory* (1977) to Deci’s ideas on self-determination and motivation as related to human behavior phenomena (1971), are representative of the many scholars whose research have their genesis in Erikson.

Though some might think of Erikson as the father of identity theory, it is more accurate to credit him with coining the phrase *identity crisis*, a term of art which became the embodiment of 20<sup>th</sup> century existentialistic philosophizing and the discordant social angst and turbulent unrest which followed during the decades of the 1960s and 1970s (more on this below). More to the point, it was Freud’s research in psychoanalysis, an exacting method of taxonomy and description of psychological phenomena that ultimately gave rise to his concepts of ego, super-ego, and id – albeit from a psycho-

sexual perspective, which suggests Freud is the father of identity theory.<sup>221</sup> Nevertheless, Erikson's contribution is in psychosocial development: a predictable progression of life stages through which one navigates over the course of one's life, each stage distinguished and punctuated by particular life challenges/conflicts and characteristics (See Chart 1 below). Erikson's pursuit of a working theoretical basis for these developmental stages or phases, helped inform and shape his ideas related to the larger question of "ego identity." Ego identity is something not easily defined, for it is conceptually and psychologically complex, given its historic rootedness in late 19<sup>th</sup> century Freudianism washed through mid-20<sup>th</sup> century psychosocial lens; leaving it, to a degree, undefinable in a concisely satisfying way.<sup>222</sup> It is rather a construct which bears psychological height and depth infused with sociological texture and cultural meaning and nuances. Identity theory is simultaneously personal and intimate yet communally ubiquitous. It is personal in that - as it occurs over time - it is genitive to the degree it gives rise to psychological growth and development, the opposite of which is stagnation. When stagnation occurs, it may be responsible for or contributory to various developmental pathologies (neurosis, adjustment concerns, etc. Erikson speaks in depth about identity achievement and identity confusion as it relates to this).<sup>223</sup> It is communal in that personal identity influences and is influenced by larger social reality. Remarkably, society frames personal identity, providing "the skin" and acceptable extent to which each personality grows. Erikson mentions the idea of *umwelt*, that individuals and the larger "environment," which

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<sup>221</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Introductory Lectures On Psychoanalysis*, ed. James Strachey (New York: Liveright, 1989). This volume serves as a helpful primer on Freud's ideas.

<sup>222</sup> Erik H. Erikson, *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1994), Prologue.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, 208-212.

precedes and surrounds us and of which we are part, are inextricably linked.<sup>224</sup> External reality and internal psychosocial formation influences one upon the other. Hence, identity or the selves of which comprise the individual, is truly multifaceted. He points out that the difficulty in assigning identity a singular definition stems from this multiplicity. The ego, super ego, the id, *umwelt* create complex psychosocial reality out of which individuals must find balance to achieve a healthy sense of *self*, unsuccessful negotiation of which gives rise to ego “confusion,” that is, the inability to properly integrate roles and expectations into one’s self-image.<sup>225</sup> Erikson’s identity theory helps describe personality formation phases, role development (e.g., male/female) and responsibility, social expectations of the individual, the role and influence of group/intergroup relatedness or lack thereof. He demonstrates some sense of professional uncertainty regarding the vastness of this terminology in his own work and reflections. However, the term “ego identity” has stuck, I would argue, as a result of its highly useful and paradoxical nature. As Erikson argues, “workers” must continue to tease out its nuances until useful, sophisticated language emerges that ties all these levels of identity in an equally elegant theory of psychological development.<sup>226</sup>

Identity crisis is the term and concept for which Erikson will always be remembered. The popular depiction is of young and/or, perhaps, maladjusted individuals in the throes of psychological distress resulting from internal searching for meaning and personhood. Erikson’s conceptualization, however, is quite complex, outlining an eight stage progression through which individual’s (in Erikson’s universe, children were

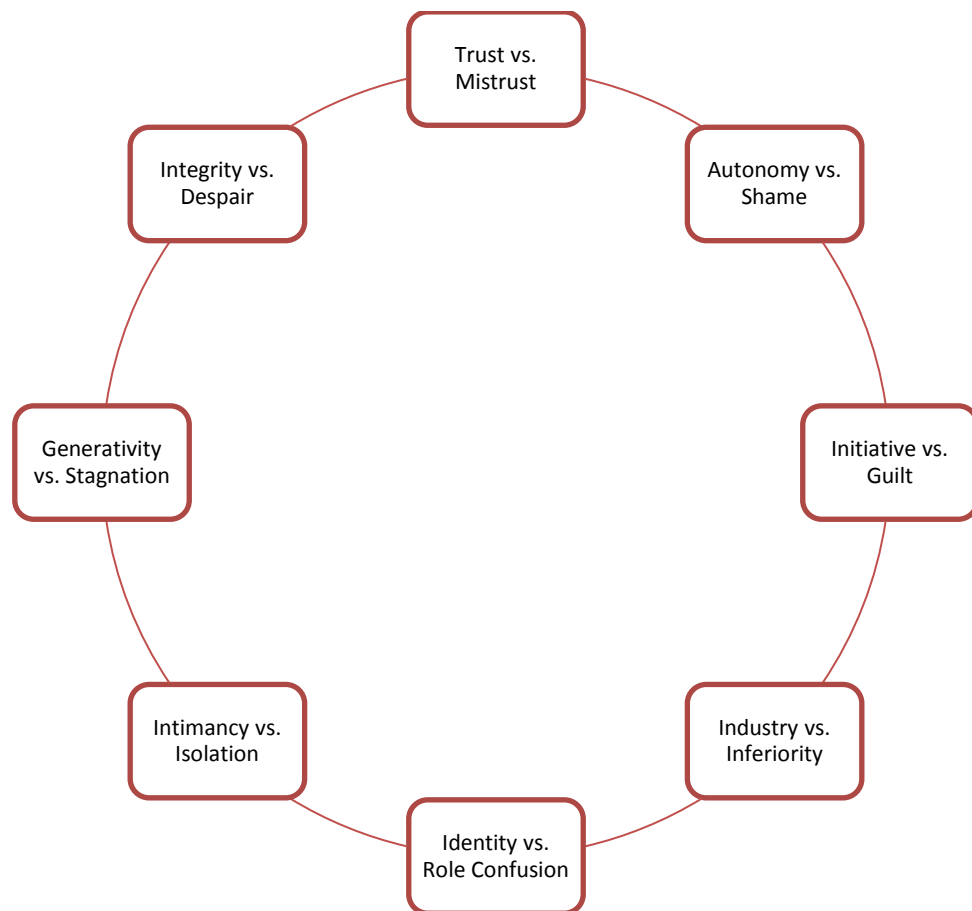
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<sup>224</sup> Erikson, *Identity*, 219.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*, 212-220.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, 223.

typically his subject of study) traverse into ever sophisticated levels of personal psychosocial formation; whether or not they do so successfully is another matter. Sequentially listed, they are: 1) trust vs. mistrust; 2) autonomy vs. shame; 3) initiative vs. guilt; 4) industry vs. inferiority; 5) identity vs. role confusion; 6) intimacy vs. isolation; 7) generativity vs. stagnation; 8) integrity vs. despair (See Chart 1 below).



**Figure 5 – Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development**

Erikson's schema is progressive in that one stage sequentially follows the other, beginning in infancy and ending in mature adulthood. Identity crisis properly defined is that event, challenge, defining moment that propels one inextricably towards the next developmental stage or phase. Successful negotiation from one phase to the next entails

mastering the necessary skills and experiences (competencies) which help resolve the crisis and initiate the new life phase.

Erikson equates stage one, trust versus mistrust, with infancy. During the early months of life a child learns whether or not she can trust mother for care, nutrition, and nurture. If care and food are not dependably provided, the child develops mistrust, a psychological profile that will affect all succeeding stages to some degree. Or, if a child is overly protected, she may develop an overly dependent or insecure psychological profile. The relationship between mother and child is extremely crucial in this phase. As a child negotiates this stage she learns whether or not to trust her caregiver and to what degree. In the process she gains the necessary skills and experiences (competencies) that will take her to the next development stage, autonomy versus shame. Erikson's observation is that a crisis precipitates the beginning of each stage and, over time, one's ego gains increased sophistication, serving the goal of forming personal identity. Stated sequentially, each psychosocial stage chronologically and developmentally correlates to a life benchmark. Thus, infancy (chronological stage) equates to trust vs. mistrust (psychosocial phase); toddler equates to autonomy vs. shame; preschooler equates to initiative vs. guilt; elementary school age equates to industry vs. inferiority; adolescence equates to identity vs. role confusion; early adulthood equates to intimacy vs. isolation; adulthood equates to generativity vs. stagnation; and mature adulthood equates to integrity vs. despair.<sup>227</sup> For Erikson, the result of the identity crisis is either identity

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<sup>227</sup> Kendra Cherry, "Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development," About.com, <http://psychology.about.com/od/psychosocialtheories/a/psychosocial.htm> (accessed January 21, 2013).



achievement or identity diffusion.<sup>228</sup> In other words, one either becomes an integrated individual over the course of one's life; or one becomes stuck, as it were, suffering from "arrested development" and in need of some crisis or intervention to jump start the process once again.

James Marcia, a noted researcher in adolescent, departs from and critiques Erikson identity crisis and diffusion theory, particularly in relation to the notion of identity achievement and identity confusion, arguing that, from a psychosocial development perspective, adolescents must first explore then "commit" to certain identities.<sup>229</sup> Identity formation as described by Marcia is grounded in a process which includes a thorough-going exploration of and attachment to certain roles and relationships as mediated through phenomenological factors extant in one's larger society; i.e., familial relationships, religion, politics, cultural ideologies, etc.<sup>230</sup> Marcia and his colleagues developed the Four Statuses Interview evaluative tool that categorizes the degree to which adolescents engage, process, and negotiate identity formation across "life areas."<sup>231</sup> Interview results indicate an adolescent's developmental stage and the degree to which he has been influenced by exterior or internal determinants. The table below lists the Four Statuses and their definitions.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Asiye Kumru and Ross A. Thompson, "Ego Identity Status and Self-Monitoring Behavior in Adolescents," *Journal of Adolescent Research* 18, no. 5 (September 2003): 481-95, doi:10.1177/0743558403255066 (accessed January 28, 2013).

<sup>229</sup> James Marcia, "Development and Validation of Ego Identity Status," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 3, no. 5 (1966): 551-58. (accessed December 4, 2012).

<sup>230</sup> "James Marcia," Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James\\_Marcia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Marcia) (accessed January 28, 2013).

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> James E. Côté and Charles G. Levine, *Identity Formation, Agency, and Culture: a Social Psychological Synthesis* (Mahwah, N.J.: Psychology Press, 2002), 19. and James Marcia, "Identity in

Table 5 – Marcia’s Four Statuses

	<b>Identity Diffusion</b>	<b>Foreclosure</b>	<b>Moratorium</b>	<b>Identity Achievement</b>
<b>Level of Identity Commitment:</b>	Commitment: Undetermined	Commitment: Determined	Commitment: Undetermined	Commitment: Determined
<b>Level of Identity Exploration:</b>	Identity Level: Unexplored	Identity Level: Unexplored	Identity Level: Active Exploration	Identity Level: Explored
<b>Outcome:</b>	Individual exhibits no commitment to roles and little interest in identity exploration options.	Unexplored adoption of identity phase and uncritical acceptance of others’ values.	Adolescents undergoing active “crisis”. Commitments are not determined but assessments are made as to determining values.	Resultant of negotiating the crisis and attendant anxiety, progression is successfully made towards next life area, stage.
<b>Results:</b>	Diffuse adolescents have not encountered “crisis” event or display ambivalence towards exploration. Most immature of stages.*	Foreclosure happens voluntarily or as effect of coercion by external forces.	Adolescents in this stage experience anxiety which gives impetus to resolving issues of commitments, adoption of societal roles.	Adolescents demonstrate increased sense of self and self-sufficiency.

Part of Marcia’s impact in this body of research rests on his focus on adolescents and the significance of acquiring a “healthy” sense of identity versus possible deleterious correlates such as the formation of what he classifies as negative identity; that is, the

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Adolescence,” in *Handbook of Adolescent Psychology*, ed. Joseph Adelson (New York: Wiley, 1980), 159-87.

formation of and commitment to an identity that is opposite traditional societal or familial expectation; a simplified example of which is a mother whose political proclivity embraces progressive, Democratic values, a political ideology that she expects her children to adopt. However, her child, perhaps a daughter, negatively identifies with her and resultantly gravitates towards and embraces a conservative, Republican ideology and commits to that ideal as a political operative of the party.

Albert Bandura, *Social Learning Theory*, 1976, is preeminently recognized for his research into how people learn as a function of social contexts. Traditional theories of learning notwithstanding, Bandura ingeniously links the learning process to the environment in which it occurs. His insight into this social element of learning has had tremendous impact in psychological research and throughout education circles, particularly by way of enhancing pedagogical approaches in primary and secondary educational settings. The primary marker or buzzword of his contribution has been modeling.

The idea of social learning and its relationship to modeling is best exemplified by two experiments conducted by Bandura using an inflatable Bobo doll in 1961 and 1963. In the briefest of terms, a child and an adult were placed in a “playroom.” Select participating children (all children in these experiments had been pre-rated for levels of innate aggression and were placed into control and experimental groups) were told that one area of the room and the toys found there were for adults; toys found on opposite side of the room were for children. An adult and child went to their respective areas and began play. In some experiments, the adult exhibited increasingly aggressive behavior and language towards the Bobo doll, hitting it with a toy hammer, punching it in the nose and,

basically, pummeling the toy as aggressively as possible. Naturally, the adult's behavior captivated the child. Later, the child was given opportunity to play with non-aggressive and aggressive toys. Bandura found that children who had witnessed aggressive behavior modeled by an adult replicated that behavior with the Bobo doll.<sup>233</sup>

At first glance, Bandura's research does not seem to have much in common with Erikson and Marcia. Social Learning Theory (SLT) postulates behavior as follows: i) people learn by way of observation; ii) psychological/cognitive states impact learning as well as external factors (stimuli), a point to which this author will return later; iii) behavior is not necessarily affected by knowledge.<sup>234</sup> In other words, one has the choice to learn by way of observation. And for observation to serve as a viable learning methodology, the proper motivation and resulting "efficacy" (extrinsic and intrinsic motivation) - must be present. Bandura gives considerable attention to intrinsic cognitive motivation. He calls it self-efficacy.<sup>235</sup> An immense corpus of research and scholarship has grown under this rubric. What is more, his brand of cognitive behaviorism (i.e., people tend to act in certain ways to achieve desired rewards, whether external or internal) identified that learning from the environment does not guarantee behavioral changes or adjustments.<sup>236</sup> As demonstrated below in Table 6 under Behavioral/Knowledge Relationship, new knowledge does not necessitate changed

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<sup>233</sup> Saul McLeod, "Bobo Doll Experiment," *Simple Psychology*, <http://www.simplypsychology.org/bobo-doll.html> (accessed October 15, 2012).and, Albert Bandura, Dorothea Ross, and Sheila A. Ross, "Transmission of Aggression through Imitation of Aggressive Models," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 63 (1961): 575-82, <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Bandura/bobo.htm> (accessed October 15, 2012).

<sup>234</sup> Cherry, "Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development."

<sup>235</sup> Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior* (New York: Plenum Press, 1985), 223-25.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*, 223.

behavior. Stated alternatively, people will not engage behaviors in which “they do not expect that there is a good chance of their succeeding at the behavior.”<sup>237</sup>

Table 6 – Social Learning Theory

Observation Learning (Modeling)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of a live example or model</li> <li>• Use of verbal instruction</li> <li>• Use of symbolic models, metaphors, etc.</li> </ul>
Psychological States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intrinsic Motivators</li> </ul>
Behavior/Knowledge Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations can provide new knowledge</li> <li>• New knowledge does not necessitate changed behavior.</li> </ul>

Self-efficacy is the connection or lynchpin between Erikson, Marcia and Bandura, so to speak. Further, Bandura’s identification of intrinsic reinforcement helps create the theoretical node which links them all. Self-efficacy ties in with the larger concept of agency, an individual’s ability – or inability - to affect self-change; self-efficacy being the confidence or psychological disposition that one, regardless of outward factors, has the ability to initiate and exercise change; which, interestingly links to psychological causes or drives, or that which spurs determination, an area of investigation for which Edward Deci and his colleague Richard M. Ryan are illustrative.

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<sup>237</sup> Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation*, 224.

Let us pause momentarily to mention that much of the research described thus far has not transpired synchronously. In some cases the research and resultant theoretical frameworks are separated by decades. Additionally, some well-respected hypotheses have only been accepted as theoretically viable in recent years. The work of Deci and Ryan, though illustrative of the workings of determination as self-regulating behavior, is a case in point. At heart, their research investigates intrinsic/extrinsic motivators; that is, external forces/stimuli and psychological drives that influence and affect motivation influenced or directed behavior and identity forming choices. To affect one's behavior, by external or internal means, necessarily impacts formation of one's identity or, as Deci and Ryan refer to it, agency.<sup>238</sup> Agency and self-efficacy are theoretical equivalents born of parallel strands of ego-identity research which are nearly synonymous with personal competency. As Bandura crisply notes in *Self-Efficacy in Changing Societies*:

People make causal contributions to their own psychosocial functioning through mechanisms of personal agency. Among the mechanisms of agency, none is more central or pervasive than people's beliefs of personal efficacy. Perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations. Efficacy beliefs influence how people think, feel, motivate themselves and act.<sup>239</sup>

Put another way, agency amounts to an array of personal proficiency skills one masters, internalized beliefs, and the resulting self-esteem one acquires as environmental and psychosocial change is encountered and navigated. Taken together, these strains or

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<sup>238</sup> Edward L. Deci, Richard Koestner, and Richard M. Ryan, "A Meta-Analytic Review of Experiments Examining the Effects of Extrinsic Rewards On Intrinsic Motivation," *Psychological Bulletin* 125, no. 6 (1999): 627-68, <http://home.ubalt.edu/tmitch/642/Articles%20syllabus/Deci%20Koestner%20Ryan%20meta%20IM%20psy%20bull%2099.pdf> (accessed January 28, 2013).

<sup>239</sup> Albert Bandura, ed., "Exercise of personal and collective efficacy in changing societies," in *Self-Efficacy in Changing Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1-3.

“mechanisms” produce agency or self-efficacy. Depending on a variety of factors, not the least of which is self-esteem influenced by type of motivation, competency (agency) is impeded or promoted. Before continuing, however, with our review of Deci and Ryan’s contribution, a brief, contemporary, treatment of intrinsic/extrinsic motivation may prove instructive.

Daniel H. Pink in, *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*, deals with this motivational couplet as it relates to agency. Using Deci et al. as a point of departure, he insists that intrinsic strategies of motivation (rewards), based on decades of scientific research, and are preferable to extrinsic/transactional strategies. Precisely because that which motivates from inside (intrinsic) conveys higher satisfaction factors and perhaps longer lasting value than motivations in the form of externally driven rewards and punishments, which are, as Pink points out, commonly employed in business, educational, athletics, et cetera. The business sector, for instance, historically defaults to what he cites as reward/punishment strategies (strategies are defined as rewards or punishments geared toward short-term, high return gains) in attempts to increase productivity and, hence, the bottom line. Rewards/punishments combined with the use of “algorithmic tasks (scripted problem-solving formulae),” are cause of much deep-seated dissatisfaction in the workforce, he suggests. According to Pink, algorithmic tasks, a term coined by behavioral scientists, are not limited to low level, front line jobs.<sup>240</sup> Management positions, whose problem-solving functions can be readily scripted, though requiring sustained intellectual energy, can be algorithmic in nature. The corporate up sides are short-term efficiencies gained by outsourcing jobs to improve

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<sup>240</sup> Daniel H. Pink, *Drive: the Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us* (Grand Rapids, MI: Riverhead Books, 2011), 29-30.

financial and economic standing. The evidentiary downsides, however, are advancing levels of workforce dissatisfaction along with apathy and declining quality of productivity over the *long-term*, lower personal agency, and stymied creativity.<sup>241</sup> In education, extrinsic motivation strategies, typically framed as rewards, have proved strikingly ineffective over the long term. Pink cites Deci and colleagues' multi-year review to buttress this assertion found in "A Meta-Analytic Review of Experiments Examining the Effects of Extrinsic Rewards on Intrinsic Motivation."<sup>242</sup> This is cause for extreme concern given the extraordinary educational challenges many municipalities, families, and students face. Stated clearly, intrinsic rewards - those rewards derived internally for the sheer sake of the activity itself - prove more powerful motivators than extrinsic motivators over the long-term, according to Pink. Intrinsic rewards derive from *intrinsic motivation*, which is "based in the innate, organismic needs for competence and self-determination."<sup>243</sup> And extrinsic motivation comes from external sources, which may or may not be fully integrated into an individual's self-image or identity. Intrinsic motivation energizes a wide variety of behaviors and psychological processes for which the primary rewards are the experiences of effectance and autonomy. Rewards and punishments have an immediate impact but dissipate steadily over time. What is more, intrinsic motivation linked to "heuristic tasks," that is, activities for which there are no scripts, are algorithmically negative. Heuristic activities, driven by intrinsic motivators, rely on inventiveness, inquisitiveness and experimentation to resolve. As Pink states, "Precisely because no algorithm exists for it, you have to experiment with possibilities

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<sup>241</sup> Pink, *Drive*, 29-30.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>243</sup> Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation*, 32.



and devise a novel solution.”<sup>244</sup> Pink continues to assert “...rewards can perform a weird sort of behavioral alchemy: They can transform an interesting task into a drudge. They can turn play into work. And by diminishing intrinsic motivation, they can send performance, creativity, and even upstanding behavior toppling like dominoes.” This is important as it underscores the value of developing a strong sense of agency, out of which springs personal wholeness, self-esteem, and vigorous self-determination - the core concept of Deci and Ryan’s research.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the centerpiece of Deci’s and Ryan’s work has gained academic recognition, as well as practical traction in recent years, providing a means to exploring and adding crucial data to the corpus of psychosocial development knowledge and its cognitive offshoots. In their book, *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior*, Deci and Ryan build an argument for an organismic-based theory of self-motivation, Self-Determination Theory. The term organismic is operative here. Its attested definitions include “any organized body or system conceived of as analogous to a living being...” and “any complex thing or system having properties and functions determined not only by the properties and relations of its individual parts, but by the character of the whole that they compose and by the relations of the parts to the whole.”<sup>245</sup> Deci and Ryan use it to describe the intricate three-tiered nature of their hypothesis, to which we will turn shortly. Organismic is significant and, in fact, potentially liberating as it diverges with what had been the prevailing mechanistic, pre-determined views and beliefs regarding motivation influences on human behavior;

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<sup>244</sup> Pink, *Drive*, 29.

<sup>245</sup> “Dictionary.com,” s.v. “organismic,” <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/organismic?s=t> (accessed January 29, 2013).

namely, that people exist at the mercy of external and internal stimuli, physiologically-based, and cognitively hardwired processes and that regulate behavior. Within this *weltanschauung*, humans can only *react*, quite passively, to forces beyond their control. On the side of personally driven psychosocial development for which one is individually responsible, stands Self-Determination Theory (SDT), a perspective that emancipates humans from oppressive, capricious vicissitudes of external forces and inner drives. It advances that humans ought to actively engage a highly complex psychological structure that is volitional and deterministic in nature.<sup>246</sup> SDT as organismic view is systems based.

According to Deci and Ryan:

An organismic theory begins with the assumption of an active organism; it assumes that human beings act on their internal and external environments to be effective and to satisfy the full range of their needs.”<sup>247</sup>

Needs and their management - beyond that of base drives and physiological responses – is the expansive field of motivation. Intrinsic motivation is that force or psychic energy (psychic defines as cognitive/emotional attributes) from within that seeks expression through mastery of skills, competencies, or some aspect of the self and/or of the environment. Deci and Ryan state it quite elegantly, “*intrinsic motivation* is based in the innate, organismic needs for competence and self-determination. It energizes a wide variety of behaviors and psychological processes for which the primary rewards are the experiences of effectance and autonomy.”<sup>248</sup> According to Deci and Ryan, the human drive for agency or self-efficacy comes down to the fulfillment of three psychosocial needs, *competence, relatedness, and autonomy*. These motivators come about as the

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<sup>246</sup> Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation*, 3.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid., 32.

result of seeking “activity for its own sake,” as opposed to reacting to external or physiological based stimuli. Pursuing activities because they bring about a sense of fulfillment and competency relates to the desire to experience personal growth or development. Over time, such pursuits help define and redefine identity. Hence, for Deci and Ryan it is competence, relatedness, and autonomy – these three “innate,” “universal,” psychological factors in particular – that serve as the ground from which humans seek challenge and self-fulfillment. They serve as the organic parts of their Self-Determination Theoretical system.<sup>249</sup> Though Deci and Ryan advance the argument that this need set is innate and universal, one must ere on the side of caution against such broad assumptions that preclude ubiquitously held values or needs across all cultures, or within the groups located within the same culture for that matter. Needs emphases tend to shift over time based on various societal and cultural dynamics. A valued competency today may not have been highly valued 25 or 30 years ago or hence. Of greater importance is the identification and taxonomy of needs and their possible impact and influence. To wit, competency speaks to the need to gain expertise and control in life; relatedness is a social need; the desire to belong or to be part of; and autonomy is to self-determine, to act of one’s own volition. Intrinsic motivation also has had fascinating implications and for other segments of life: education; sports and business, for example. In business, management of personnel is a perennial issue. Healthy, competitive companies must manage business and motivate their workforces. Securing talent to implement motivational strategies that encourage professional excellence, which, correspondingly,

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<sup>249</sup> Self-Determination Theory is properly understood as a macro-theory involving many parts or subsets, which cannot be addressed in full here. Extrinsic motivation, one such subset, is also an aspect of Deci and Ryan’s studies. Under its aegis, they theorized Organismic Integration Theory (OIT) to categorize and describe extrinsic motivation behavior.

promotes value-added services, products, and approaches for one's customers are constant pressures. Historically, extrinsic management strategies were employed in the form of transactional-to-coercive and punitive motivators. Later advancements in behavior management applied positive reinforcements as additional skills in a manager's toolbox. Deci and Ryan's research pushes behavioral insights a little farther and provides additional tools to boot. Research revealed that tapping into a person's (or by extension, an organization's) intrinsic motivations provides a powerful, if not wiser, incentive to engage in tasks.

Intrinsic motivations relate to rewards.<sup>250</sup> Typically, people associate some kind of reward with engaging in and finishing tasks. Extrinsic rewards are rewards from an external source. Intrinsic rewards come from within. That is, people do things because they enjoy the challenge of the task. Intrinsic rewards come from resolving a challenge or bringing congruency between self and some "aspect" of the environment.<sup>251</sup> Over the course of three experiments (two laboratory and one field based), Deci tested the effect of extrinsic rewards on intrinsic motivation. Using a soma cube puzzle, a 3 x 3 x 3 cube composed of seven interlocking, geometric shapes,<sup>252</sup> Deci recruited college students to solve the puzzle. In experiment 1, students were divided into a control and an experimental group, which met over three sessions. In sessions 1 and 3, students assigned to the experimental group were encouraged to solve the puzzle for its intrinsic value.

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<sup>250</sup> Edward L. Deci, "Effects of externally mediated rewards on intrinsic motivation," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 18, no. 1 (1971): 105-15, doi:10.1037/h0030644 (accessed January 29, 2013).

<sup>251</sup> Deci and Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation*, 33.

<sup>252</sup> A Soma Cube is a segmentation puzzle made of several set smaller units smaller can be arranged into various shapes, the basic form of which is a 3 x 3 x 3 cube.

During session 2, however, students were offered money as a reward to solve the puzzle faster. Deci noted, per his hypothesis that during session 2 students devoted more time and energy to solving the soma puzzle. The final session, for which no monetary reward was offered, measured motivation levels dropped below levels recorded in sessions 1 and 2. Adding money as an extrinsic reward had a negative effect when coupled with an activity that had held initial intrinsic motivation for participants. Students in the control group were not offered money and motivation remained constant over the course of their sessions. Experiments 2 (a field study) and Experiment 3 yielded similar results. Findings from these and related experiments (See Pritchard, Campbell and Campbell)<sup>253</sup> suggest that intrinsic motivation coupled with the use of positive reinforcement – verbal praise – is more effective than the use of extrinsic rewards alone.

Other researchers and theorist have parsed identity into ever distinct categories, focusing either on identity of the self or identity in terms of social realities, e.g., groups, sectors, subcultures, et cetera. Work along these parallel tracks has proven fruitful, as psychological and social understanding of self and its relative relatedness and multilayered manifestations has proliferated. A downside, however, exists in replication of concepts along corresponding research trajectories between disciplines. The importance and sanctity of maintaining separate and distinct research paths amongst the disciplines is evident. However, as researchers strive to discover and formulate a concise unified theory of the self that is elegant in its articulation and seamless in logic, prudence dictates coordinating efforts where complementary overlap exists. Jan E. Stets and Peter

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<sup>253</sup> R. Pritchard, K. Campbell, and D. Campbell, "Effects of Extrinsic Financial Rewards On Intrinsic Motivation," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 62 (1977): 9-15.

J. Burke allude to such consideration in their article entitled, “*Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory*.”<sup>254</sup>

Stets and Burke concentrate on two distinct yet analogous identity phenomena. The first is Social Identity Theory (SIT), a socio-centric model that entails social categorization and subsequent affinity-identification with a group or groups. Per the authors, “In social identity theory, a social identity is a person’s knowledge that he or she belongs to a social category or group...A social group is a set of individuals who hold a common social identification or view themselves as members of the same social category.”<sup>255</sup> Being sociologically situated, SIT describes the nature and characteristics of intra- and intergroup relationships; the effect in-group expectation has on the social self (individual); self-knowledge and the continuing process of evaluation/actions within and between “in-group”/“out-group” dynamics. In short, individuals assume the group identity of which they are part – whether familial, ethnological or social associations, group values, sensibilities, worldview become that of the individual. This is significant in that “...the self is reflexive in that it can take itself as an object and can categorize, classify, or name itself in particular ways in relation to other categories or classifications.”<sup>256</sup>

Self-Categorization Theory (SET), which shares many features of SIT, shifts from SIT’s intergroup preoccupation in favor of recasting categories “as operating at different

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<sup>254</sup> Jan E. Stets and Peter J. Burke, “Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory,” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (September 2000): 224-37, doi:10.2307/2695870 (accessed October 11, 2011).

<sup>255</sup> Ibid., 225.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid., 224.

levels of inclusiveness.<sup>257</sup> Classification conventions such as accessibility and fit are added to SCT's taxonomy, these classifications yield improved specificity and definition. For example, *fit* breakdowns into comparative and normative classes. "Fit," per Hornsey, "refers to the extent to which the social categories are perceived to reflect social reality; that is, the extent to which they are seen to be diagnostic of real world differences. Individuals may perceive a high level of fit if the category distinction maximizes perceived inter-category differences and minimizes intra-category differences (*comparative fit*)...that categories form in such a way that maximizes intra-class similarities and interclass differences<sup>258</sup> *Normative fit* refers to instances where personal social behavior adheres to perceived group expectations of conduct; that is, there is high fit "if social behavior and group membership are in line with stereotypical expectations."<sup>259</sup> Depersonalization, a central feature of SCT, is a "core cognitive" process that drives what can best be framed as group personality adoption; i.e., a person's propensity to appropriate traits, norms, beliefs, and expectations particular to and inherent in a group, to the degree that she/he suppresses self (identity) to facilitate expression of the group's identity. Moreover, depersonalization enables "role performance" – executing the group's will or expectations relative to one's position (or role) within the group, an example of which is when a person becomes a minister or priest, the expectations other ministers or priests (the in-group) influences behavior; one's public deportment, for instance, is largely a function of in-group expectations. Role performance is carrying out

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<sup>257</sup> Matthew J. Hornsey, "Social Identity Theory and Self-categorization Theory: A Historical Review," *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 2, no. 1 (January 2008): 204-22, doi:10.1111/j.1751-9004.2007.00066.x (accessed October 4, 2012), 208.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

or exemplifying fundamental expectations of a particular responsibility/role. Conversely, actual and/or perceived social disadvantages, wrongs, advantages, offences, etc., associated with a given group (for example, a minority: women, ethnic minorities) are embraced and internalized, cementing one's adhesion to the group, something SCT refer to as in-group "prototyping," that is, "...a cognitive representation of the social category containing the meanings and norms that the person associates with the social category."<sup>260</sup> Stets and Burke remark, "...depersonalization is the basic process underlying group phenomena such as social stereotyping, group cohesiveness, ethnocentrism, cooperation and altruism, emotional contagion, and collective action."<sup>261</sup> Stets and Burke go on to argue that Social Identity Theory and Identity Theory (IT) use similar terminology to describe disparate yet conceptually related psychological realities: the social self and the psychological/cognitive self. SIT makes use of *self-categorization* theory and IT makes use of *self-verification* theory to describe mechanisms similar in the cognitive realm. SIT articulates the ability to create outcomes utilizing the language of *self-esteem*. IT has developed *self-efficacy* to describe the development of that skill set. Their point is that devotion to developing a meta theory capable of describing both "macro and micro processes" must be pursued. These two, social identity and identity theory, are just two of several constituent theories investigating the relationship between self and groups. *Social Categorization* Theory discussed briefly above, developed by John Turner et al., is noted for its emphasis on group behavior elaborating on the salience

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<sup>260</sup> Stets and Burke, "Identity Theory," 231.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid., 232.



of “us versus them” cognitive states as formative of group dynamics and interactions.<sup>262</sup>

Be that as it may, our purpose goes beyond that of noting etymological and epistemological pedigrees of ego-identity theories or their individualized application. Our interest lies in group applications, a blend between identity and categorization assumptions and applications. Specifically, how does an organization’s self-understanding (self-identify) affect its ability to influence its sense of agency in successfully adapting to environmental changes. Stated from an environmental position in relation to the functioning of Christian churches, does community perception augment or weaken congregational self-identity and the long term success of a congregation in relation to its mission and adapting to change? Which self-identity theoretical linkages may prove to benefit a congregation in this regard? To gain proper perspective, judiciousness dictates closer investigation into the theological, historic definition and distinguishing marks of the Christian Church in general, as the major marks of the Church defines them (at least, one would assume that to be the case) as a localized reality. The historic “marks” of the Church reflects its identity. Conversely, the behavior of the “modern” church ought to serve as indication of how the Church thinks of itself. The same working assumption should be true for local branches of the Church. Utilizing self-identity theorems, one might pose assessments, evaluations, and diagnose (where applicable) healthy and pathological manifestations of congregational (local Church) behaviors, behaviors that might hinder or enhance congregational longevity in relation to navigating and adapting to change, something I label transitional management potential. Adding alacrity to this examination, attention will focus primarily on the Church’s core

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<sup>262</sup> John C. Turner, *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989).

distinguishing marks and questions of congregational self-identity health and pathology and what can be done to assist congregations in the throes of mal-developed self-identity?

### **Church Identity: Whose We Are Informs Who We Are**

Social Identity Theory and Social Categorization Theory taken together comprise what practitioners in the field term social identity approach or perspective,<sup>263</sup> theories that elucidate psycho-cognitive and psycho-social processes, development, and possible encumbrances to healthy personal/group actualization. Understanding the nature and dynamics of inter- intra personality and social behavior is not just an academic exercise giving expression to some researchers' affinity for psychological and social curiosity. For some, such as this inquirer, understanding the interaction of subtleties of ego-identity theory and social identity approaches is rooted in theological/faith commitment related to the nature of the historic Christian Church and its modern local expressions, the local church. Early in the Creation narrative, its author utters a profound, theologically laden statement: that humanity is created in the image of God, the *Imago Dei*, one possible heuristic rendering of which posits that that which is part and parcel of *the Self*, is in some way extant in humanity, and in each individual. That, certainly, is a weighty proposition full of fascinating possibility, risk, and responsibility, which humanity bears in terms of accountability before its Creator and in stewardship of nature. This *Imago Dei* quite possibly speaks to the quintessential substance of personality, soul, or mind of every individual who has walked this earth, that which philosophers and psychologists have termed *self*. If there is – or ever was – an image stamped, etched, or indelibly integrated into human personality, and by extension inherent in the life of the groups of

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<sup>263</sup> Hornsey, "Social Identity Theory," 204-209.

which we part by nature or choice; the question becomes: how does and should that image inform our lives? To frame the questions existentially: Who are we and whose are we? Does the image of God drive that indefatigable energy that spurs humanity's search for meaning, which inexplicably draws us forward? Given the human condition, one may wonder if that image has been diminished in some way. Perhaps it was insufficiently embossed onto human personality to insure consistent alignment of humanity with the Creator? Interesting question. The Biblical narrative advances that an external force exploited human weakness which necessitated extraordinary Divine measures to counteract the consequences of humanity's failure and restore the notion of God's image and the efficacy it conveys. And what, exactly, does it convey? Could it possibly represent the bestowal, endowment, or imbuelement of the Divine's own attributes and identity in microcosm? Consider: Biblical salvation as restoration of the *Imago Dei*. The cross represents that aspect of the work of Christ that reconciles humanity with the Creator and burnishes the image of God; restores the prospect of healthy identity, and invites those so restored to join in the continuous, historic work of reconciliation. To quote the Apostle Paul, "...God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not holding anyone's faults against them, but entrusting to us the message of reconciliation" (2 Cor 5:19 New Jerusalem Bible). As relating to Christ's historic presence and work, a proto definition of the Church slowly emerges, one that recites not merely the etymologic roots and permutations of the expression but the nature and identity intrinsic of its meaning. Now what follows is practical application of what this *presence* means as the Church expresses its restored identity through action, as an expression of the Image of God through time and history. Questions for further reflection entail, what forms has this

presence assumed within the historic Church? And, how does the question, “who the Church is?” inform its relationship to God and society?

In terms of social reality, the Christian Church is a 2000 year old global religion with over 2.18 billion adherents,<sup>264</sup> tracing its beginning to Jesus Christ, who is embraced as the “head” of the Church (Col. 1:15-18 NKJV). As such, the Church belongs to and serves the mission and purpose of its founder and head, Jesus Christ, in short order answering the question, whose we are? In secular society as well as common parlance, Church is understood as a sacred space where Christian adherents and seekers of numinous experiences encounter God. Yet for all their sacredness, geographic ubiquity, sometimes opulent and often humble sublimity, that which people refer to as “church” are not more than the buildings in which the actual Church gathers; whether erected or converted spaces, they are mere structures in which the people of God assemble. The etymology of Church, ἐκκλησία (*ecclesia*), properly understood is an assembly called together for political purposes.<sup>265</sup> That particular sense of ἐκκλησία (*ecclesia*) as political gathering underwent modification by Jesus (see Matthew 16:8) and his followers to represent the people of God, people who express the restored image of God vis-a-vis certain outward attributes or behaviors.<sup>266</sup> Hence, the Church of Jesus Christ is a Christianized turn of phrase referencing the people of God who identify with and through Christological experience. This Christological experience is that which binds Christians

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<sup>264</sup> “Global Christianity: A Report On the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population,” The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, <http://www.pewforum.org/christian/global-christianity-exec.aspx> (accessed February 4, 2013).

<sup>265</sup> Justo L. González, *The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984), 1.

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

into that mystical relationship termed the *Body of Christ* (Rom. 12:5 NKJV). Although the phrase “people of God” serves as a chief religious identifier and qualifier for the Christian community, other religious groups that share the same ancestry and heritage might take exception. More to the immediate point, however, the people God comprise the Church - those who gravitate to the person and follow teachings of Christ and/or who have been reared in such a Christian context and adhere to the community’s lifestyle and teachings. At the social level, Church is an institution comprised of people who assemble locally in “cells,” the nature of whose structure and administration depends on ecclesiastical tradition, doctrinal distinctions, polity arrangements and allegiances - as in American Protestantism. Older Christian traditions such as Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism are more hierarchically driven. And though Christians consider themselves the people of God and are bound together by a common faith history and resulting “marks,” they are not necessarily of the same ilk; significant theological differences exist. The differences are, in large part, that are responsible for the existence of modern magisteria<sup>267</sup> of Protestantism (inclusive of associations, sects, and assemblies), Catholicism (inclusive of various orders), and Orthodoxy (inclusive of ancient Eastern Church traditions). All of this is to say that the idea of Church is complex and far from monolithic. All these iterations nonetheless constitute the Church.

To apprehend the modern complexity of church identity, with a lower case *c* necessitates identifying attributes and characteristics common to all orthodox Churches

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<sup>267</sup> Stephen Jay Gould, *Rocks of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1999), 3-7; 47-67. Gould articulates the concept of NOMA (Non-Overlapping Magisteria). He proposes the creation of realms or zones of expertise over which science and religion have right to authoritatively act. These magisteria work best if they never ‘overlap’. Friction from overlap results in the modern phenomena of misunderstanding as to role of science and religion. Adaptation of Gould’s taxonomy to describe related yet significantly distinct workings of the major branches of Western Christianity are useful for classification purposes.

across time, theology, and geography, if possible. Predicated on the life, teachings, and practices of Jesus Christ, the churches are foremost transformative communities-of-faith steeped in practices of prayer, the contemplative life, religious instruction, theological/doctrinal thought, spiritual formation, and an acute sense of mission (Mission may be defined as evangelism in the sense of spreading the message and practices of the faith). Let's say more about this as it deserves elaboration.

Jesus' earliest adherents did not consider themselves an offshoot of Judaism but rather living out the fullness of their ancient faith.<sup>268</sup> As the early Church (comprised of Jewish followers) began to attract Hellenized Jews - and numbers of Gentile believers via the efforts of missionaries such as Paul of Tarsus - the need arose for formalized practices and confessions of faith, things which not only communicated the faith but transmitted Church identity in institutionalized form. (Brief mention will be made regarding the imperialistic tendencies of Roman Empire and how those tendencies might have shaped the Church's identity early in its history below.)<sup>269</sup> Of the many attributes particular to the Church, those most salient were first articulated by the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D., and 56 years later confirmed and reiterated by the Council of Constantinople in 381 A.D. (Gonzalez, 168-180).<sup>270</sup> These Church councils served as both polemics against heresy and as a means to affirm what early patriarchs of the Church considered orthodoxy. Subsequently, these councils identified and ratified the central marks of the Church, namely that it is "...one holy catholic and apostolic church."<sup>271</sup> Unfortunately, such

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<sup>268</sup> Gonzalez, *The Early Church*, 20.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid., 112-220.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid., 168-180.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

narrow definition, may de facto serve to eliminate other characteristics that are distinctive as well. Nevertheless, these earliest identifiers stressed the nature of the Church as being *one* (united), as God ought to symbolize that which unifies faith (see Deuteronomy 6:4); *holy* as God is Holy (see Leviticus 11:44); and *universal* in its reach (catholic) as it is *missionary* (apostolic) in purpose. These four attributes are the core dynamic upon which other marks or attributes have accrued. As already mentioned this traditional definition of Church identity seems narrow and probably feeds modern Christianity's heightened sense of exclusivity, a not unforeseen by-product designed to preserve doctrinal purity and fidelity. However, does such restrictiveness lead to hyper-vigilance or myopia within the Christian community? To preclude the possibility that Church identity is greater and more complex than its core creed just might engender the kind of restrictiveness that limits the possibility of what the Church can be - a limitation of human imagination not of God's design or intent. The argument could be made on scriptural precedent that the New Testament Church possessed attributes beyond that of oneness, holiness, Catholicism, and apostolicism; attributes particular and unique that deserve equal recognition. Some of these other marks, though not of such historicity as the Councils of Nicea and Constantinople codify, are significant. They epitomize atavism at its best, resurfacing as principal tenets of restoration, fidelity, and faith during Protestant Reformation activity and its subsequent reformation theologizing. Consequentially, Protestant Christian groups recognize more than four core marks of the Church; and of those they hold some may not correlate to the four historic distinctives previously cited: *one, holy, universal, apostolic*. The question as to which marks are quintessentially "orthodox" depends on tradition. Even though marks vary between Christian traditions

(The Christian community is highly diverse in traditions, theologies, and viewpoints, which may be indicative of essentially varying forms of Christianity. That is, there are ‘Christianities’ marginally linked by religious ancestry and less so by generalized characteristics) it seems to be the case that marks tend to be fewer not more in number, and where numbers of attributes have increased, they have concomitantly done so to reflect experiential modalities. That is to say, descriptors as to how church is experienced as opposed to intrinsic modalities, qualities, or states of being. Moreover, experiential attributes stress a sort of practicable ‘ego-centrism’ (here meaning internal focus on organizational maintenance and behavior) which seems largely performance based. For example, Reformed theologians have stressed the preached Word, the proper handling or administration of the sacraments; and conscientious attention to church discipline as prominent markings of the Church, along with admittance to Church life through baptism, high fidelity to the written Word as the rule of faith.<sup>272</sup> As the reformation sounded cries of *Sola Scriptura* and *Sola Fide*, access to the full life of faith and community became reality for laity. These newer markings of the Church gave fresh detail and definition to that which had characterized the western Church and sought to provide lasting guidelines and structure for preserving it. One could argue these attributes, in fact, serve a secondary function of social relevancy, linking and locking the Church (a rather spiritualized concept) to its immediate social context. The Church is transformative and salvific. It is also altruistic in scope; provides opportunities for personal betterment and societal improvement; and encourages social interaction. Though the idea of social interaction may lack theological throatiness, it does underscore a

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<sup>272</sup> “Marks of the Church,” Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marks\\_of\\_the\\_Church](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marks_of_the_Church) (accessed November 15, 2012).



significant point: Church is a place where people go for spiritual transformation, insight and personal development; to express their deepest spiritual longings; act on their sense of compassion and desire to provide assistance to others. Yet, the idea of identity is far more complex than that and requires maximized exploration of its constituent facets.

### **Social Influences on the Personality (Identity) of the Church**

Social and cultural realities contribute to the Church's contemporary contours as much as theology, popular piety, and doctrinal formulae. The weight of two millennia undoubtedly forged modifications to Church identity which are *prima facie*, not evidentiary. Put another way, the cultures into which Christianity spread often affected Christianity in bilateral fashion, producing shades of change to rituals, practices and beliefs; sometimes blending or marrying indigenous religious local ceremonies and traditions to those of the Church; other times super imposing Church tradition onto local folklore. In as much as the Church assumed it was "converting" and integrating local cultures into its community, we allege those various cultures, simultaneously and similarly influenced Church identity, even if at marginal levels. This does not imply that core beliefs were compromised, verification and substantiation of such assertions goes beyond the parameters of this chapter. The genius of Christianity lay in the fact its core tenets appear to have remained relatively stable (though not without challenge)<sup>273</sup> while rituals and lesser customs exhibited a fair degree of malleability, allowing the Church to engage, merge into, and become part of the tapestry of its new environs. (One might also justifiably argue that Christianity has suffered syncretistic related effects, altering it and initiating streams of theological disparity and harm which have had detrimental effect to

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<sup>273</sup> Gonzalez, *The Early Church*, 120-135.

it and its host cultures. Mutual interplay between any religion and society yields both planned for and unexpected results and consequences.) We shall focus on two examples of this, Roman imperialism and the rise of Modernity.

A good example of societal influence on Church identity is the Roman Empire from Constantine forward. Of course, Rome's impact on the early Church predates Constantine's rule. However, his rule represents that point where the Church transitions from a maligned sect to respected participants in Roman life. After Constantine's historic conversion experience involving the *Chi-Rho* image, his involvement in his new found "faith" brought a certain shape to Roman imperialism that became sanctioned by the western Church. This sanctioning was functionally mutual in that Constantine's involvement brought state authorization to a marginalized and erstwhile persecuted sect composed of women, persons from lower social strata, etc.<sup>274</sup> State authorization conferred official gravitas to Church patriarchs' (bishops, presbyters, emergent theologians) social status. The Church experienced rising state favor, an adverse by-product of which was Constantine's growing influence in the affairs of Church thought and life. Concomitantly, newfound political freedom permitted Roman culture conduits through which its influence could mingle and sway Christian subculture; which had for decades defined itself counter culturally - if not antithetically - to that of Rome. It is not farfetched to postulate that Constantine adroitly applied the powers of his position as 'converted' emperor over Church life to squelch fractious theological quibbling and infighting among Church Fathers; which threatened possible protracted strife and divisions in burgeoning sectors of Christianized Rome. Thus, he brought various factions of the

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<sup>274</sup> Gonzalez, *The Early Church*, 31-48.

Church under a single banner (identity) in as much as his military ventures consolidated his empire. Further, imperial oversight in Church affairs weighed heavily in favor of Roman culture impacting Church life and thought, ultimately influencing the shape of the western Church's identity for millennia.

Though prudence cautions not to overstate Roman culture's impact on Church identity, one wonders to what extent Rome's culture and mythology infiltrated it. Did Rome's cultic life and popular beliefs interrelate with Christian theology and faithful praxis? The concept of *unwelt* is informative here which asserts environment affects development. One assumes that if that is the case at the individual level, given what we have learned about the interrelatedness of Identity Theory and Social Identity & Categorization Theories, it probably operates similarly at the group level. For example, imperialism describes Rome's expansionist program over the course of its history.<sup>275</sup> Frank, in speaking of subtle factors and popular historic misconceptions of Roman imperialism, refers to it as the "national expression of the individual's "will to live."<sup>276</sup> As an aside, this statement represents an intriguing linkage of nationalistic political strategy rooted in the individualistic drive to acquire and secure resources for sustenance. Of direct relevance is the fact that Roman imperialism - expressed in a cultural context – affected Christian doctrine! It found its way into the lexicon of the Church. Frank called it the "doctrine of world-empire."<sup>277</sup> Apparently taking its cue from Rome, Church leadership adopted an attitude of theological conquest. As a corollary result, the spread of

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<sup>275</sup> Tenney Frank, *Roman Imperialism* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1914), Preface, electronic format.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

the Gospel message became inextricably linked to a kind of faith-based expansionism supported by its missiological mandate: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19, NKJV). In essence, Christianity had become the new religious face of Rome; its state church. One can argue that Christianity’s identity, in terms of how others perceive it, may be quite imperialistic: the Crusades, the Inquisition, its mission efforts (though outstanding in terms of organization and training for its missionaries) were often perceived as culturally and ethnologically insensitive by indigenous peoples. The question remains, in what way or ways did imperialism affect Church identity? Suffice it to say that a cursory review of western history reveals a Church suffering from *schism* (read: neurosis? psychosis?), at times engaging the world stage as bearer and visage of God’s message and at another times employing Machiavellian schemes to build its reach and power as a world conqueror. Besides imperialism’s effect on Church identity, another correlate of recent interest is the social and cultural currents influencing Church identity as found in the impact of Modernism.

As much as the Enlightenment was a philosophical and cultural departure from the classical world view; modernism is more a reaction than divergence from the objectivism of the Enlightenment and the presumption of human goodness. Modernism looks to a world defined by science; progressivism; secularism; where the beautiful and repulsive are equally nestled in the eye – if not psyche – of the beholder.<sup>278</sup> Modernism is marked by particular ways of thinking that are not always easily delimited. Characteristic

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<sup>278</sup> Laype Johnson, “The Enlightenment to Modernism: A Brief Examination of This Revolution in Thought and Society,” *Socyberty*, <http://socyberty.com/philosophy/the-enlightenment-to-modernism-a-brief-examination-of-this-revolution-in-thought-and-society/3/> (accessed November 21, 2012).

of all 'isms' it represents shifts in thought, ideals, epistemology, philosophy, art, and mass cultural attitudes. The industrial revolution serves as its watershed moment (Modernism embraces the notion of humanity's ability to create a better world through science, technology, and the forces of modernization typified by 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century developments) yet its roots travel deep into the Renaissance. Its optimistic call for progress, which should sound familiar to children of the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, propelled (those for whom it stands as vanguard) reexamination of ideas in light of new information and realities philosophical, economic, and political.<sup>279</sup> Modernism, whether with a capital or lower case letter, expresses a change in cultural perspective. To be modern is "grow up" culturally. It is society maturing intellectually, breaking from the irrational belief systems and naiveté of the past.

Perhaps modernism is difficult to define because we are still so close to it. As Everdell says, "...Modernism requires uncomfortable leaps...Is there a Modern style in sociology – or is it simply Modern to be a sociologist?"<sup>280</sup> Be that as it may, arguments regarding Modernism and that which makes it unique from eras which precedes it, The Age of Reason or that which succeeds it, Postmodernism, are topics of fierce debate. Of immediate concern here is Modernism's effect on Church identity. As Christianity is not monolithic, fairness dictates listing salient features of modernism's effect on the Catholic and Protestant Church. To maintain manageability, the features examined will be limited to the Catholic and Protestant magisteria as found in the United States.

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<sup>279</sup> William R. Everdell, *The First Moderns: Profiles in the Origins of Twentieth-Century Thought* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1997), 1-12.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid., 5

Firstly, modernism has not been wholeheartedly embraced as a philosophy congenial to the life of the Church by all Christians, Protestant or Catholic. Perceived as antithetical to healthy orthodoxy, some (especially within Catholicism and to a lesser degree Protestant traditions) aggressively fight against what they consider modernism's deleterious effects. Modernism's focus on the innate goodness of human agency refutes Church doctrine of Original Sin. Two other prominent features against which the Church rails include biblical criticism and secular humanism. Biblical criticism's scientifically based investigations into biblical historicity eviscerates the sense of sacredness for some. Holy writ is treated as texts bounded by place and time, which function to discount claims of divinely inspired scripture. Rather, the Bible is treated as the convergence of historical forces that were recorded by very human observers. In similar fashion, supernatural events are investigated and methodically parsed and ultimately explained as either naturally occurring phenomena (not clearly understood by the original observers) or attempts to convey metaphorical faith statements. At best, such positions are anathema to fundamental Biblical adherents. As for secular humanism, it may best be construed as the offspring of the Enlightenment for Christian traditionalists. Its presence is the driving force which splinters and factionalizes secular and religious domains within western society.<sup>281</sup> On the other hand, there are those for whom modernism does not represent such a threat. Modernism has influenced the Church, and in doing so, modified the way its characteristics, synthesizing modern tendencies into Church thought and practices. It must be noted modernism's influence is not rejected by all Christians. At its core, modernism implies moving from the old in service of the new; towards progress.

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<sup>281</sup> Wikipedia.com offers unexpectedly informative treatments on modernism and secular humanism and the Church worth reviewing.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in modern architecture and art. One might consider this urge towards progressivism a natural tie-in – theologically - to the uniqueness of Judaism (monotheistic Judaism is noted for its linear, progressive outlook at history. History is moving forward towards an intended end), a sentiment and historical perspective to which the Church shares allegiance. It also represents a theological and practical way of viewing the world and the Church's place in it. Hence, the modern Church is progressive; it is reformed in its theology and activist in its tendencies. The modern Church respects proper order – naturally – and the protocols and procedures which insure it. In discriminating between faith and reason, the modern Church eschews superstitious vestiges – demons, the Devil, angel, and maybe even entertains the idea about the death of God – for rational explanations of life which the Church actively advocates. Pastors become chief executive officers and resident psychologists rather than spiritual leaders and theologians-in-residence. Church governance (and those who govern) gains respectability and cachet in the eyes of larger society as the faith-based institution emulate corporate and secular governance and behavior. Theological differences drive ever more particular derivation of ideas and religious penchants to which congregations increasingly compete for niche or market share. Modernization drives technological advances, which, in turn accelerate the rate of cultural change: Diversity increases in type and scope as demographic trends change the face of the nation. Local religious groups and national denominations wrestle with all this complexity as Church identity undergoes alteration. And face change the Church must or else die as result of strategic short-sightedness, pietistic denial, theological recalcitrance, or ill-founded delusions of maintaining doctrinal purity. Modernism was a shaping force

on the identity of the Church. Some argue that modernism's current iteration, postmodernism, is presently exerting forces which necessitate congregations to evaluate their identity and the relevance of the Church's historic mission.

Congregations have identities and personalities - behavioral/ideological constructs and patterns developed over time in active relation to their communities that overlay and act upon the primary identity of Church. Further, it is possible for congregational personality (identity) to override, compromise, or otherwise thwart the primary identity of the historic Church. Sociologically, congregations are people forming groups whose larger dynamic act upon the individuals who join them, dynamics well-documented in socio-psycho literature. Group personalities entail cultures; particular ways of being and doing that are codified in by-laws and constitutions. However, group cultures exist beyond the written word. Indeed, the true force of culture is encountered and experienced at that level where it is transmitted orally or by way of subtle actions and behaviors that support the life and activity of the group, transmissions which can – and sometimes do – run counter to codified documentation. Group culture is societal culture in microcosm. Norms and mores either accentuate the core mission of a church or insidiously and pathologically work to against congregation effectiveness (dysfunction). Dysfunctionality, however, does not fully negate a congregation's ability to provide some level of ministry to its members or benefit to its larger community. It is to acknowledge that such congregations are ineffective at best in their mission. A corollary of such identity or cultural pathology is that self-evaluation is non-existent. Take for example, projection of blame onto congregational and/or professional church leadership for persistent, recurring problems, declining growth or member dissatisfaction. Such long



standing issues may be indicative of a culture that surreptitiously acts against its stated goals and program, something of which congregant may be aware. Congregations are aware of their stated mission and initiatives. They are cognizant of teachings and traditions. They are less aware of the weight of their culture, a weight that can literally bog down and impede a congregation's plans and execution of its mission. It is quite possible that a given congregation may, unfortunately, encounter a series of poorly prepared professionals and ill-qualified volunteers at the helm of leadership. But it is more likely is that a congregation's self-perception - whether for good or ill - unconsciously guides selection of its leadership as well as influences other aspects of congregational behavior.

Congregational self-perception may affect the opinion of its surrounding community thus affecting congregational effectiveness. Put differently, the way in which a congregation believes it is perceived in the eyes of its larger community plays a part in congregational health. How we see ourselves in the eyes of others is important to self-identity. Research conducted by Daryl J. Bem on *self-perception* theory elucidates this point.

Self-perception operates from two related postulates: 1) "Individuals come to 'know' their own attitudes, emotions, and other internal states partially by inferring them from observations of their own overt behavior and/or the circumstances in which this behavior occurs [,]" and 2) "...self-perception theory suggests a partial identity between self- and interpersonal perception: To the extent that internal cues are weak, ambiguous, or uninterpretable, the individual is functionally in the same position as an outside observer, an observer who must necessarily rely upon those same external cues to infer

the individual's inner states. “<sup>282</sup> Although Bem’s research is behavioral in nature - growing out of a Skinnerian framework -<sup>283</sup> it does substantiate the claim that environmental cues and/or stimuli, or inferred cues and stimuli, can directly influence an individual’s or groups self-perception. We assert that the force of such perception can dictate how an entity engages with its world. “To us as observers, the most important clues to an individual's inner states are found in his behavior,” notes Bem.<sup>284</sup> In the case of congregations suffering organizational decline, our assumption is that negative self-perception exacerbates that sense of negativity, which gets played out in terms of disruptive behavior and dysfunctional culture. Perhaps, the same mechanisms might be finessed in controlled reversal, possibly improving an entity’s negative self-perception and identity toward the positive, improving the likelihood that transitional management potential firmly establishes itself and flourishes.

Such is the position taken by Dweck and Leggett. Their research initially explored maladaptive and adaptive patterns from the stance of “helpless” versus “mastery-oriented” behavior. As they describe:

we begin by describing two major patterns of cognition-affect-behavior that we identified in our early work: the maladaptive “helpless” response and the more adaptive “mastery-oriented response...The helpless pattern, as will be seen, is characterized by an avoidance of challenge and a deterioration of performance in the face of obstacles. The mastery-oriented pattern, in contrast, involves the seeking of challenging tasks and the maintenance of effective striving under failure.

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<sup>282</sup> Daryl J. Bem, “Self-Perception Theory,” *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 6 (1972): 2-57, [http://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&q=daryl+j+bem+self-perception+theory&btnG=&as\\_sdt=1%2C33&as\\_sdt=1](http://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&q=daryl+j+bem+self-perception+theory&btnG=&as_sdt=1%2C33&as_sdt=1) (accessed November 12, 2012).

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4, 9.

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

Most interesting, our research with children has demonstrated that those who avoid challenge and show impairment in the face of difficulty are initially equal in ability to those who seek challenge and show persistence. Indeed some of the brightest, most skilled individuals exhibit the maladaptive pattern. Thus it cannot be said that it is simply those with weak skills or histories of failure who (appropriately) avoid difficult tasks of whose skills prove fragile in the face of difficulty. The puzzle, then, was why individuals of equal ability would show such marked performance differences in response to challenge.

Our efforts to explain this phenomena led us to the more general conceptualization of *goals*... We proposed that the goals individuals are pursuing create the framework within which they interpret and react to events. Specifically, in the domain of intellectual achievement, we identified two classes of goals: *performance* goals (in which individuals are concerned with gaining favorable judgments of their competence) and *learning* goals (in which individuals are concerned with increasing their competence). We then tested and supported the hypothesis that these different goals foster the different response patterns – that a focus on performance goals (competence judgments) creates a vulnerability to the helpless pattern, whereas the pursuit of learning goals (competence enhancement) in the same situation promotes the mastery-oriented pattern....”<sup>285</sup>

Herein lays an important insight for our question related to self-identity and efficacy of an individual or group. Potentially, the mechanism for addressing self-negating (maladaptive) behavior utilizes a strategy of competence through growth, “learning” goals as opposed to “performance” goals as identified by Dweck and Leggett. Helplessness may not be a behavior employed by organizations or groups but powerlessness and vulnerability are affectations groups in decline experience. Such affectation and behavior is maladaptive; antithetical to engaging change creatively and effectively. Environment influences such as community (outside) perceptions, culture and societal influences weigh heavily upon groups. Taking Stets and Burke’s research into account, this kind of social weight contributes to depersonalization and related behavior.

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<sup>285</sup> Carol S. Dweck and Ellen L. Leggett, “A Social-Cognitive Approach to Motivation and Personality,” *Psychological Review* 95, no. 2 (1988): 256-73 (accessed October 25, 2012).

As Dweck and Leggett's model is designed to transcend psychological applications provides optimism for the religious sector. Along with insight comes the possibility of redirecting decline by means of competence-through-growth oriented strategies. It is our suspicion that congregations struggling with issues of relevance and decline pursue performance based strategies much as their secular counterparts (In fact, congregations tend to mimic the business sector in managing their organizational concerns). "Mastery-oriented responses" – competence-through-growth – offers a viable path for congregations to reassess and actively reshape their self-identities and image. Embracing decline is maladaptive. It is "[a] response pattern that deters...from confronting obstacles or that prevents...functioning effectively in the face of difficulty..."<sup>286</sup> Recasting self-identity first requires the volition to embrace the necessity of change. It is in the process of change that transformation occurs and transitional potential is amassed. It "...involves the seeking of challenging tasks and the generation of effective strategies in the face of obstacles."<sup>287</sup> It involves the process of making appropriate goal choices (i.e., determining a vision or course of action that enhances the possibility of development and the best behavioral linked steps to achieve it), choices which can positively or negatively influence outcome. This is making the most of adaptive change, to reference the popular work of Heifetz and Linsky.<sup>288</sup> In fact, the objective of leadership in congregations wrestling with issues of decline and low self-esteem ought to include how best to interactively set adaptive goals that stimulate competence-through-growth; understanding

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<sup>286</sup> Dweck and Leggett, "A Social-Cognitive Approach to Motivation," 257.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> Ronald Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Marty Linsky, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2009).

congregations have personalities/identities that need acknowledgement, validation, and require sensible, behavioral-based goals that are vision affirming and change embracing.

## CHAPTER FIVE METHOD AND EVALUATION

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on...."

Rudyard Kipling

### Background

That quote captures my attitude and situation of just a few years ago. Prior to that stanza from Sir Rudyard Kipling's poem "If" coming to mind as I reflected on my journey, I had been serving a small historic urban church for more than a decade as pastor yet, surprisingly, I had not completely burned out. The work was challenging; the mission field large; and there was plenty to do at a bustling location in the heart of Brooklyn. Given that situation I should have felt grounded and stable, ready to launch out into ever broader waters of ministry having crossed that invisible divide where one truly becomes a congregation's *pastor*. Longevity had paid its dividends as serving for more than a hand full of years at most any church is such a rarity now days. The 'rights and privileges' of the pastorate and all that the title afforded flattered and stroked my ego. And I had learned to play the 'pastor pretense' well, meeting with colleagues and friends and engaging in bellicose self-aggrandizements typically exchanged amongst preachers, pretending ministry and life was all that they should be. However, beneath the surface - at a deeper level - I knew something was wrong. A part of me insisted I should have been

satisfied but in reality I was miserable and just holding on. At times the thought had crossed my mind that I had paid a dear price to be afforded the title of pastor. Leading a congregation as its spiritual leader had lost its appeal. Perhaps appeal is too light a word...purpose is better. The disconnection was between being a pastor as I had long imagined prior to becoming one and the modern expectations that role demanded. But, I held on. I held onto nostalgic notions of the pastorate and what that had meant: teaching, preaching, discipling; growing a congregation. I held onto traditional ideas of pastoral work that did not connect to the vastly changing world of which I was part. Finally, I had determined to hold onto the only work I had known for the better part of a decade; that had defined me and gave my life significance more than I care to admit. Though I held on (more accurately, I desperately clutched and clawed at the crumbling substance of reality around me) it should come as no surprise that my ministry brought little personal or professional satisfaction. Gone the exuberance, energetic enthusiasm and nearly unmitigated passion I felt when I first accepted my call. The sense of call had waned and settled into dry, ecclesiastical routine; I was living from Sunday to Sunday with little passion or purpose between. Serving as pastor was no longer God's work; it was a frustrating and demanding job, plain and simple. Ironically, this realization did not occur all at once in some grand flash or instance of awakening. It came about through painful moments of honest self-appraisal; reflection; casual yet very intentional heart-to-heart conversations with the few close friends I had; and most importantly, the occasional "complaint session" with my spouse, who agreed to be a sounding board and lent a sympathetic yet critical ear. As a result these interpersonal interactions and deliberate moments of reflection compelled me to drill deeper—to wrestle and come to grips with

my emergent yet not fully actualized identity - the “who am I?” of who I was becoming; my reforming self-image as I tussled over priorities and purpose in a charged, dynamic time of change.

Erecting parameters of a new reality is as disorienting as it is exhausting. My construct began with identifying fluctuating degrees of a new self-awareness filtered through the rigors of critical personal assessment. What exactly was I experiencing? What was the source of my dissonance? How had I come to this present point? My review examined my educational foundations: Had something preparatory and vital been missed in classroom or field experience or had my education and training insufficiently prepared me? Had hours of psychological assessments and observation missed some subtle cognitive fluctuation or psychological aberration in my personality? My query probed the very footing of my spiritual roots: Was I truly called and cut out for this work or had I otherwise convinced myself of it for some altruistic but misunderstood reason? And the two questions that bedeviled me most: Had I convinced myself out of some misdirected sense of piety to pursue this work? Or worse, had I been beguiled by God? The questions tumbled and arose agitating my mind and disquieting my soul.

It is not the case that life had unraveled; it is more accurate to say that it was in transition, undergoing a change of which I was not initially aware. Although my congregation had experienced a season of growth, it never reached the level for which I had hoped and worked. Such realizations can – and do – affect one’s ego. Unlike many of mainline Protestant urban settings, economics did not figure much into the equation for most of my tenure. Ministry opportunities were robust and people joined but most newcomers did not stay more than a couple or so years as career advancement created a



community of upscale transitory workers – something better job-wise always seemed to present itself for most folks. New ministries were developed to meet demographic needs but seldom grew deep enough roots to thrive more than a couple years. Energy was devoted to leadership development but personal commitment levels remained disappointingly low as career and family demands trumped church commitment. Despite those challenges congregational life displayed signs of growth, deepened spirituality and some increasing connectedness to the surrounding community. All this transpired alongside growing family demands. Our children’s school and extracurricular activities demanded time. As my schedule had more flexibility, I became the default point person for parent/teacher conferences, PTA meetings, school involvement and sporting events. Though we tried to divide those responsibilities, attending many of our children’s functions fell into my parenting portfolio. No matter how successful a parent I felt, the disparity between home and church responsibilities became the locus of festering angst and frustration; which, certainly fed into my disenchantment with ministry. To compensate, ironically, I did the only thing I knew to do: As my children got older I threw myself more deeply into work. In the lingo of Amway house parties, “I planned my work then worked my plan.”<sup>289</sup> I had fallen into the deadly tailspin Robert E. Quinn describes as the destructive choice “to stay very busy.”<sup>290</sup> Trying to manufacture the ministry I had wanted (actually, models I had observed elsewhere), I attended church growth conferences; implemented growth campaigns; reviewed old ministry models I had

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<sup>289</sup> “Learn About Our Company,” Amway.com, <http://www.amway.com/about-amway/our-company> (accessed December 6, 2011). Rich Devos and Jay Van Andel co-founded the American Way Corporation in 1959 in Ada, MI. The co-founders abbreviated the American Way Corporation to Amway, to reflect the company’s mantra of building business “through the power of relationships.”

<sup>290</sup> Quinn, *Deep Change*, 18.

been taught and poured over new methodologies promulgated in various church leadership publications and blogged on websites. As pastor I felt it my sole responsibility to devise ministry strategies; preach growth related sermons; teach spiritual growth materials and did so until my health failed. Not many men 43 years of age face an aortic aneurysm and live to tell the story. I have.

In the middle of all that self-imposed pressure, family and ministry demands — which I must say appeared to finally take off—my life came to a screeching halt. After undergoing several medical studies and tests the facts were undeniable: I needed aortic aneurysm repair and aortic valve replacement, inclusive of partial carotid arterial reconstruction – an extensive procedure described to me as “the mother of all heart surgeries.” If I dawdled I would be dead in less than six months, just shy of my next birthday. It took a while - maybe a few days - before the gravity of those words took hold. Strange how the mind constantly relives some traumatic events and totally blocks others. I had wished those words could have been blocked but they played ad nauseam. If I failed to act I would not be around for my children’s high school and college graduations; watch them fall in love or discover their life callings. Like my own grandparents, I would not live to see or spoil my grandchildren. Then like a bolt I realized, I would not celebrate twenty years of marriage with my wife. The biggest, most significant change of my life was staring me eye to eye. Though sharing this health related scare experience in depth would prove immensely therapeutic on the one hand and inspirational to the reader on the other; to do so is serious digression and not the purpose of this rendering. It is to underline the fact that of all the challenges I had faced in life, this one was the greatest and I met it! It is a truism that whatever does not kill you makes you stronger.

Returning to work a few months later I saw much of the ministry momentum had dissipated. While out of the pulpit, I received reports how everyone had pulled together. New leadership had emerged to insure things continued but the critical momentum and energy needed to maintain church growth, to transform the congregation, had waned and palpably so. Later I learned too much of the change effort had rested with me; congregational ownership had not been adequately achieved. To complicated matters, full recuperation required nearly two years. Nearly twelve months passed before I had regained sufficient physical stamina and mental agility to work more than a few hours a day; and another full year before I had regained sufficient emotional wellbeing. Around that two year mark, having focusing on exercising and fighting to get back onto a healthy keel, a moment of stark honesty hit. I asked myself, “do I have the will, the desire, to do it again?” Did I have the desire to work just as hard – if not harder – than before to rebuild the momentum? As I questioned myself, those old lines from Rudyard Kipling’s poem, “If,” came to mind:

...Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,  
And stoop and build’ em up with worn-out tools...  
If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
And never breathe a word about your loss...<sup>291</sup>

Many additional months had passed before I genuinely decided to re-commit. God had called me and to the best of my knowledge I had not received a transfer notice or new orders just yet. Despite this, depression set in...yet another challenge! Doing things over again had not burned me out but something had definitely changed. Though I had

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<sup>291</sup> Rudyard Kipling, “If,” PoemHunter.com, <http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/if/> (accessed December 6, 2011).

determined to rebuild with “worn out tools,” it felt as if the “tools of my trade” had failed me completely. Honestly, it felt as if God had failed in some way. Conceivably, I wondered if not only were my tools worn and obsolete; what if my mental map of the world, of Christianity, was dated? Alan Roxburgh talks about this very phenomenon – how the modern mindset suffers from mental map dissonance - in his book *Missional Map-Making: Skills for Leading In Times of Transition*.<sup>292</sup> If this were the case then my image of the world did not accurately resonate with the actuality of the world. To compensate, I had worked harder as if the issue was purely technical. Alas, my struggle was more than one of mere technical application. Quinn describes the harder work approach as “[choosing] short term personal survival” in favor of longer-term stability. In other words, I had determined to just hold on and hold out in lieu of a transformational plan hence the depression. Addressing mere technical concerns—that is, tinkering with organizational structure—amounted to “superficial changes,” a failure to make any “[significant] change in basic core structures and processes.”<sup>293</sup> Different kinds of tools and an informed worldview were needed. Fortunately, current attitudinal and worldview distinctions were most apparent among our younger attendees and members, the “Millennials” as some call them. It occurred to me their views and sentiments were most reflective of the surrounding community. The irony of the situation became clear: Functionally, I had a repaired circulatory system yet I had not changed internally. I needed changing, “deep change.” This change could not be limited to skill improvement or finding new methods for ministry. My worldview needed expanding. If I embraced

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<sup>292</sup> Alan Roxburgh, “Map Shaping Our Imaginations in Modernity,” in *Missional Map-Making: Skills for Leading in Times of Transition* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 3-17.

<sup>293</sup> Quinn, *Deep Change*, 16.

and embodied a personal commitment to change as personal development then, maybe, my example could galvanize others to make similar commitments, marshaling again the critical mass needed to ignite congregational transformation, if not resurrection. Knowing that others in my congregation yearn for renewal has sparked the course of this investigation. The parallel between my personal life experience and my congregation's stage of life is not lost. This, I believe, is a sort of divine serendipity, a synchronicity that affirms my call and the deep spiritual relationship between this pastor and this people. Our lives are intertwined at this point in history and the personal journey of this pastor, in some way, serves as an analog and metaphor for the larger journey of the Greenwood Baptist Church community.

### **Solution-Focused Theory**

As discussed in chapter three, Solution-Focused Theory is our synthesis developed from Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky's *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*; Chip and Dan Heath's *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard*; and Herrington, Bonem, and Furr's *Leading Congregational Change*, riding atop Kollar's solution-focused pastoral counseling approach where the desired "outcome dictates the process, rather than the process dictating the outcome."<sup>294</sup> This proactive approach has increasingly informed our cultural and administrative change efforts. Additionally, it empowers healthier relationships among leadership as energies are engaged in solution solving and far less in recriminations. Congregants are energized as the ability to address issues is shared via the solving process. *Adaptive Leadership's* dynamics adds depth to solution-focused practices as it provides core leadership the tools for a lengthier process

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<sup>294</sup> Kollar, *Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling*, 17.

of organization-as-system evaluation and critical challenge(s) identification and modification, challenges that reside on cultural and inter-relational dimensions. Increasingly, leadership is working to model and encourage behaviors (*Switch*) that exemplify congregational culture characteristics resonate with our emerging vision. Over the course of the project, congregational leaders met every four to six weeks to worship, clarify values, build collegiality and identify strategic issues to address in succeeding training events. Congregants, as participants of ministry groups, have been encouraged to envision new ministries, improve existing programs as well as solution solve ministry execution issues as de-centralization of decision-making is becoming the cultural rule rather than the exception. The spring's phase of the strategic transformation initiative will entail congregation-wide values clarification sessions, mission revisions, and strategic planning projecting possible congregational structure over the next eighteen months, including establishment of a Christian preschool.

### **Methods and Evaluation**

The body of organizational management literature pertaining to the corporate sector is prolific and prodigious. The religious sector (church related in particular), though not as expansive as its business counterpart, is just as imposing. Having culled through both corporate and religious sources, this project narrowed its focus to that research dealing with the emerging subject of transformational management; that is, subject matter relating to transformational leadership models and theories and transformation studies related to organizational change initiatives. Care was given to utilize research provided by lifelong organizational management practitioners, business and church consultants, corporate management gurus, and various research disciplines and specialists. Still, given the topic's ubiquity practicality prescribed conducting a less

than exhaustive review of every transformational theorem and model, which is simply beyond the boundaries of this project. When it comes to transformational models, the real test of theoretical and practical efficacy is not fully located in their designs, implementation or execution. The “proof-in-the-pudding” rests in the outcome. Change is a very tough process to manage as every two of three change initiatives fail as borne out in the research. Transformation is, perhaps, more challenging as it stipulates essential change in both an organization’s culture and in its core leadership’s state of being. That being said, as this project is a multi-month process, results based on a final outcome cannot be proffered at this time. Instead current standing of goals, strategies, and evaluations are tendered.

### **Project Design: Adaptive Solutions**

Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky’s model contributed to the developing structure of the demonstration project. Their book, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, is a “field book”<sup>295</sup> designed to help diagnose organizational dysfunctions - perhaps stemming from decline though not necessarily - or opportunities and provides action stratagems for adapting to both internal problems and external environment influences. Their goal is to generate *adaptive capacity*, the ability and resilience to rise to the occasion and meet change challenges. Of the many tools and frameworks provided to advance an adaptive leadership process, the suggestion of dividing challenges into two basic categories or “solutions” was most advantageous: adaptive challenges and technical challenges.

The textbook (literally) definition of adaptive challenge is “[t]he gap between the values people stand for (that constitute thriving) and the reality that they face (their

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<sup>295</sup> Heifetz, *Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 6.

current lack of capacity to realize those values in their environment).”<sup>296</sup> According to Heifetz et al., this kind of change is possibly the thorniest as it requires “deep change” in people. It represents cultural, attitudinal, and values reassessment and adjustment. From the outset our determination has been that a simple (yet protracted process) of organizational restructuring was insufficient for the Greenwood Baptist Church (Such an attempt was made between 1997 and 2001, which produced some organizational improvements until 2005 but the initiative was overly depended on the pastor and a few other members to sustain). It was determined that a successful initiative must integrate cultural transformation premised on a carefully selected and articulated set of common core values; values the pastor, church leaders, and congregation must identify and subscribe to.

Distinguishing adaptive from technical challenges provided a conceptual vehicle for: a) addressing a values clarification process that would help mold a new culture over time producing lasting effects on the church’s stated vision, mission, and distribution of resources; and b) engaging as much of the full range of people’s gifts and talents in a process guaranteed to frustrate and aggravate the less process-oriented. As Heifetz et al. state:

Adaptive challenges can only be addressed through changes in people’s priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties. Making progress requires going beyond any authoritative expertise to mobilize discovery, shedding certain entrenched ways, tolerating losses, and generating the new capacity to thrive anew.<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Heifetz, *Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, Glossary.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid., 19.



The first stage along this process involved engaging core church leaders in times of worship (affirming faith beliefs and central Christian values), and exercises designed to team build, discover commonalities and engender trust necessary to challenge behaviors and unspoken patterns of thought contributing to organizational decline. As adaptive challenge depends less on authority-driven approaches and more on collegiality, integration of its framework was deemed essential to the project.

Technical challenges, on the other hand, are “problems that can be diagnosed, generally within a short frame of time, by applying established know-how and procedures. Technical problems are amenable to authoritative expertise and management of routine processes.”<sup>298</sup> Technical responses to systematic problems (read: adaptive problems) represent methodological misapplication but are highly typical as the reaction is to locate responsibility squarely with leadership which often then applies technical expertise across the board in problem solving efforts, consuming resources (chasing good money after bad) and contributing to mounting levels of frustration and/or managerial failure.<sup>299</sup> Our tack assumes diagnosing the technical from the adaptive enables the project to affect change bilaterally, addressing values and culture and identifying technical issues to which members with specialized knowledge can pursue. Addressing technical problems is important because “they have known solutions that can be implemented by current know-how.”<sup>300</sup> Pursuing technical problems allows leadership to manufacture small successes, “bright spots,”<sup>301</sup> which can help fuel adaptive change

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<sup>298</sup> Heifetz, *Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, Glossary.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid., 70-87.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>301</sup> Heath, *Switch*, 27- 48.

motivation down the line. Also, solving technical challenges helps improve overall organizational structure and build trusts among ministry (team) members.

Greenwood Baptist's change project operates along this structure: values clarification, cultural realignment, diagnosing dysfunctionalities, creating organizational adaptive capacity all fall into the adaptive challenge tract. The creation of new ministries; peer-to-peer training; strategic planning; Greenwood Preschool development; establishment of preschool board; creation of capital fund campaign fall under the category of technical challenges.

For the purpose of identifying and tackling goals geared to cultural transformation Part 1 will address *adaptive challenges*. Goals and strategies related to organizational changes will be addressed in Part 2, *technical challenges*.

### **Part 1: Adaptive Challenges**

Change generates an environment Heifetz et al. calls *disequilibrium*, an indeterminate period of time where the negative effects of change color the life of an organization.<sup>302</sup> It is a time marked by “conflict, frustration, and panic to confusion, disorientation, and fear of losing something dear.”<sup>303</sup> The goal of the leader during this season is not necessarily to mitigate the tension; it is to “live into the disequilibrium.”<sup>304</sup> This is what various authors such as Kotter and Herrington et al. identify as creating a sense of urgency.<sup>305</sup> The idea all authors suggest is that there must be an optimal degree

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<sup>302</sup> Heifetz, *Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 29.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid., 28-29.

<sup>305</sup> Kotter, *Leading Change*, 370-372 and Herrington, *Leading Congregational Change*, 1-15.

of tension and pressure to jar an organization from an apathetic to reactive to proactive state.

“You have to continually fiddle with the flame to see how much heat the system can tolerate. Your goal should be to keep the temperature with what we call the *productive zone of disequilibrium (PZD)*: enough heat generated by your intervention to gain attention, engagement, and forward motion, but not so much that the organization (or your part of it) explodes.”<sup>306</sup>

### **Goal #1**

An early and essential project goal was to raise awareness among core leaders and the membership about congregational malaise tied to organizational decline and the danger of slow death. One strategy to increase awareness entailed developing a series of sermons to provide biblical models for confronting encumbrances to change. What is more, the messages would stress change as necessary to continued spiritual growth.

As the process of transformation will be lengthy, another goal was to assemble a cadre of individuals. Persons with whom I could share my vision and who would agree to serve as peer-to-peer coaches and assist with strategic planning and implementation of training modules for core leaders and membership, the Strategic Planning and Visioning Team. The project’s leadership training/team building component was dubbed the Officers’ Round Table (ORT) by Ms. Brenda Provost, one of the planning team member/consultants.<sup>307</sup> A third, somewhat aggressive goal under this section proposed raising congregational awareness through a history contest; by raising congregational awareness of its history members would gain greater appreciation of their past.

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<sup>306</sup> Heifetz, *Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 29.

<sup>307</sup> Ms. Brenda Provost has been a member of Greenwood Baptist Church for the past six years. She serves as chair of the Hospitality Committee and co-teacher of the Sunday Adults Bible Class. She is a caterer and entrepreneur.

**Evaluation of Goal 1:** As the project has primarily engaged Greenwood Baptist Church officers to date, strategy implementation has not been evenly spread across the congregation. An assessment of officers' perception of several church-wide factors has been assessed with a sixth month re-assessment scheduled for April 2013 (spiritual and relational vitality) during the fourth ORT training session.

Per the plan, a series of six conscious raising messages were developed with an additional three on associated topics that were delivered spanning several months' time. The six core messages focused primarily on negotiating issues of change, copies of which are located in Appendix D.

To create a baseline for what leaders felt about a) their perception of congregational health and spiritual wellbeing, and b) their assessment of personal spiritual and relational health in the context of the congregation, a questionnaire was developed based on Herrington's chapter in *Leading Congregational Change*, "Spiritual and Relational Vitality."<sup>308</sup> Perception of congregational spiritual health compared to core leaderships' spiritual health was measured by rating practice of several spiritual disciplines identified by Richard Foster in his classic *Celebration of Discipline*. As spirituality is an intangible quality, the determination for grounding it behaviorally provided means whereby to gauge its practice as a measure of overall spiritual health. Foster proffers twelve such spiritual practices categorized as "The Inward Disciplines," "The Outward Disciplines," and "The Corporate Disciplines," as detailed in his book. The spiritual vitality portion of the questionnaire queried perception and participation in the four inward disciplines: meditation, prayer, fasting, study; and a combination of the

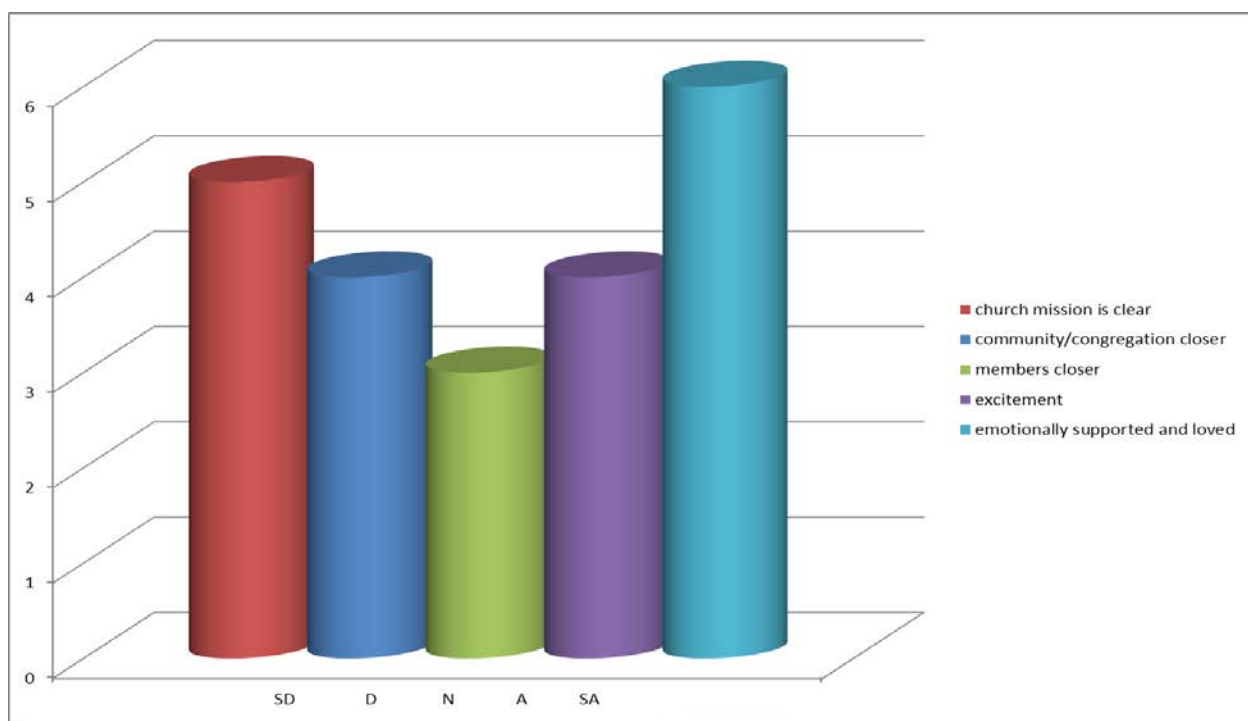
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<sup>308</sup> Herrington, *Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 16-27.

outward/corporate disciplines: service, worship, celebration. As spirituality incorporates facets of relationality (corporate interface), perceptual references regarding congregational interactions were assessed using fellowship as a spiritual behavior in the collection of spiritual qualities.

On the topic of relational vitality, the questionnaire asked respondents to rate their perceptions and personal practices as well. As formation and maintenance of congregational self-image is a function of relational health, respondents were also asked to weigh in on an issue of community perception by indicating how well they thought the congregation embodies its mission to others.

There are seventeen core leaders who are responsible for providing direction for various ministries. Of the seventeen, only one person has not been able to attend ORT sessions for work-related reasons. The figures below present the rankings, ratings and perceptions of 99% of Greenwood Baptist Church's core leadership group. Figure 6 represents leaders' perception of the congregation's health as related to their understanding of decline as defined in ORT session 1(see Appendix B).

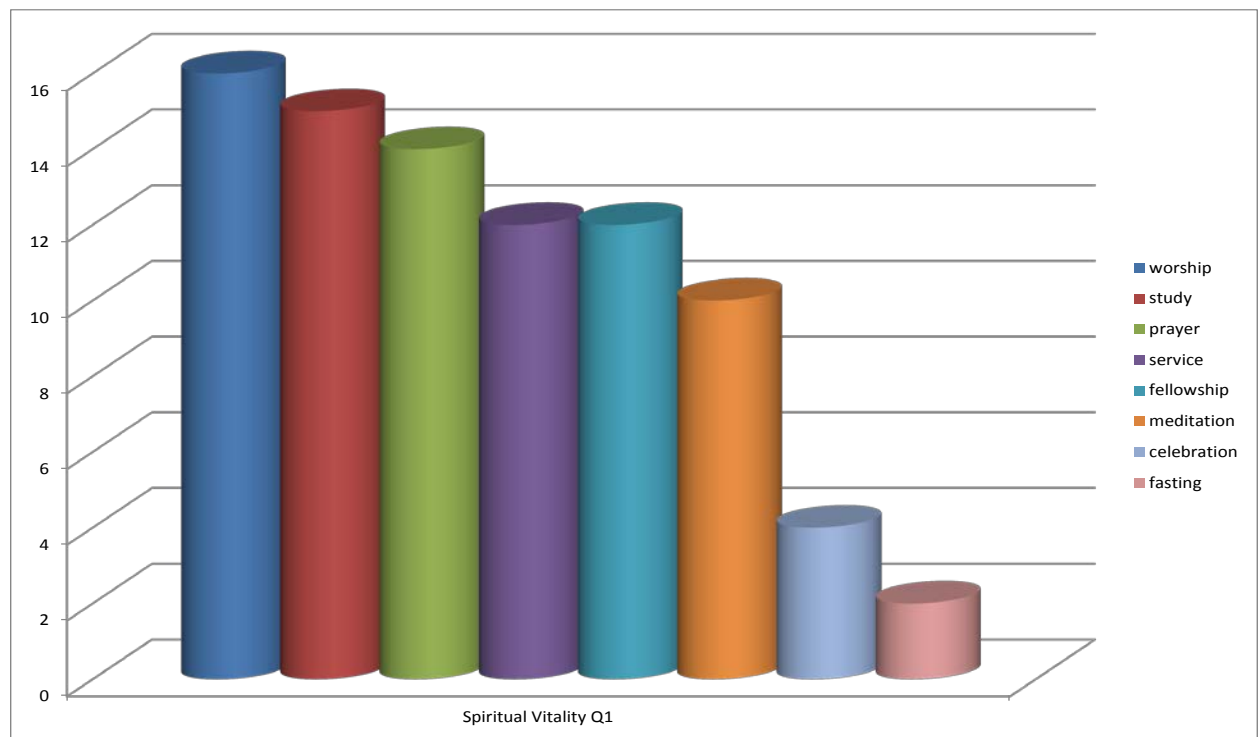


**Figure 6 – Congregational Vitality as Related to Decline**

Some explanation is necessary. Respondents were asked to rate from strongly disagree to strongly agree, their perception of Greenwood's relational vitality and relevance. Five categories were identified: 1) clarity of church's mission (outward perception); 2) parity between community and congregational lives; 3) level of fellowship; 4) congregational enthusiasm; and 5) emotional fulfillment. Reading from left to right, respondents indicate a low sense of mission clarity; that is, the congregation does not embody its mission well to others; there is weak connection between the congregation and the larger community; stagnant relational depth between members of the congregation; yet some evidence of enthusiasm about the direction of church life. Feelings of emotional support may corroborate the fact that declining congregations become insular and focus more on membership upkeep and needs.<sup>309</sup>

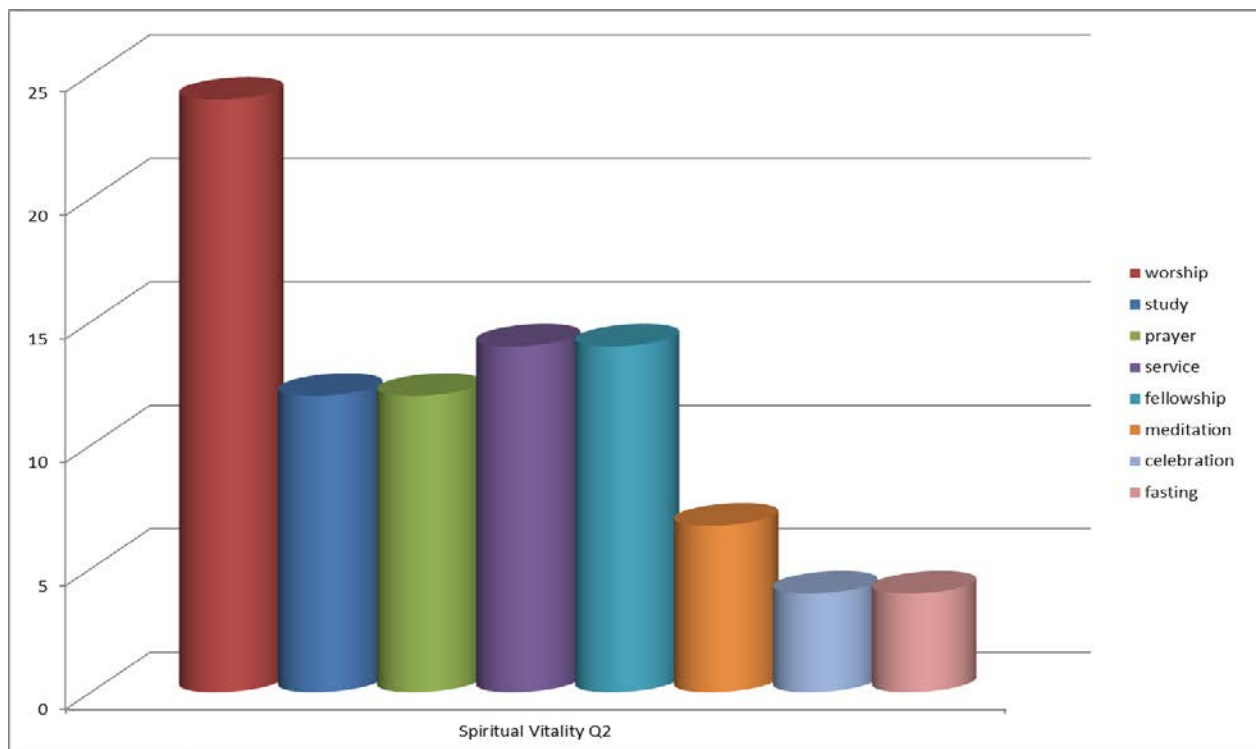
<sup>309</sup> McIntosh, *Taking Your Church*, 65-73.

Figure 7 below represents core leaders' perception of congregational vitality. Gaining insight as to how leaders understand congregational vitality should help drive strategic and ministry planning. All questionnaires will be used periodically to assess changes in perceptions.



**Figure 7 – Perceived Congregational Spiritual Vitality**

The results of leaders' perception of congregational spiritual vitality suggest behavioral evidence of worship participation, study, and engagement in prayer as ranking highest, respectively. Perception of members' participation in service and fellowship opportunities are near even, with less focus on meditation, celebration and fasting, which fall considerably behind the first six indicators. These indicators are interesting when compared with leaders' self-disclosure of their personal spiritual vitality listed in figure 8.



**Figure 8 – Leaders’ Spiritual Vitality**

Worship ranks as top priority similar to leaders’ perception of congregational spiritual vitality. But from that point forward, little else spiritual alignment between congregation and its leadership occurs. Study and prayer as spiritual disciplines rank significantly lower for leaders as compared to the broader congregation, a troubling revelation that is unfortunately corroborated by Greenwood Baptist Church’s leaders’ anemic participation in church-wide study and prayer opportunities based on anecdotal observations. Service and Fellowship rank slightly higher than study and prayer, perhaps due to the relational qualities inherent in these practices. Greenwood Baptist’s leaders are, by definition, service oriented and spend significant time interacting with others as part of their ministries; meditation, celebration, and fasting rank as low priority practices. As the figures above represent only officers’ perception of congregational spiritual vitality and not the congregation’s assessment of their own vitality (congregational



questionnaires on spiritual and relational vitality will be administered at the May 2013 initial congregation wide session), the information presents the Candidate a) a baseline snap shot of officers' perceptions and personal practices, and b) provides data to assist planning preparation germane to ORT training sessions.

Questionnaire Methodology. As mentioned above, questionnaire content was assembled using sources from Foster's *Celebration of Discipline* and Herrington et al. *Leading Congregational Change*. Questions were designed and arranged utilizing a straightforward ranking or rating of choices, which were then tallied and sorted from highest to lowest priority. To help control bias, strategic planning team members who participated in the first series of the questionnaire, many of whom serve in leadership capacity, will not be privy to questionnaire results as their knowledge may affect their response in subsequent surveys. The same holds true for all respondents. Results are intended to aid Candidate (Site team is privy to this information) in identifying issues and leading design strategic plans to address areas of concern at this phase of the project.

Officers Round Table Training Sessions. A goal of the strategic project is to build leadership capacity. As the congregation had become increasingly insular and oriented towards facility and membership maintenance, concern about a correlating decline in leaders' spiritual health and wellbeing; collegiality; and sense of purpose grew for the Candidate. To facilitate change among the core leadership, Officers Round Table training sessions have been designed with attention to: increasing spiritual vitality, active team building; values clarification; and a solution-solving component. Greenwood Baptist Church is a multi-ethnic congregation comprised of people from most walks of life, many of whom work demanding jobs requiring high levels of critical thinking and problem

solving skills. Much of Greenwood Baptist's leadership cadre is comprised of such people, who respond to problems quickly but not always cognizant or appreciative of the nature and gravity of Greenwood Baptist's decline dilemma. As figures 7 and 8 above represent, Greenwood Baptist may rate higher on Sunday morning gathering but less dedicated to continuous spiritual formation in other church related contexts. The first priority of the ORT is to gather leaders to worship and pray as leaders, taking in the breadth and depth of leadership as being among the first to worship and pray. Officers Round Tables meet for a minimum of four (4) hours. Morning sessions begin with worship which runs for 45 minutes to an hour. Leaders rotate responsibility for worship roles as arranged by Strategic Planning Team members. A team building component follows worship that involves exercises designed to build trust and mutual knowledge of others with whom leaders share and bear responsibility. Afternoon sessions entail values clarification discussion and small group work then solution solving; that is, some technical issue(s) for which leaders devise implementable and executable solutions to aid either ministry or administrative effectiveness. Adaptive problems – values related – are identified for continued discussion as the ORT sessions progress. Adaptive problems will be categorized and shared with the congregation after church wide sessions begin.

## **Goal #2**

The second stated project goal is strategic planning team development accompanied by acquisition of a professional church consultant. As stated, a team of six individuals were recruited, four of whom have met regularly to plan and implement OTR sessions. The other two individuals consult as their ability to commit is limited.

Strategy two of goal number two is acquisition of a professional church consultant to advise the strategic and visioning process. As selection of qualified individuals is an

onerous process, inquiries were made to American Baptist Churches of U.S.A. (ABC USA) denominational leaders for recommendations and support. Mr. Alan J. Roxburgh, president of Roxburg Missional Network, was suggested as his agency presently works with ABC USA on their nationwide Transformed by the Spirit adaptive change campaign. We met with Mr. Roxburgh concerning our project and the prospect of consulting; however, his interaction with ABC USA's national project proved prohibitive for him, time-wise.

Through connections with Lutheran and Presbyterian colleagues, we contacted Mr. Tony Rose, an organizer of the Village Church, NYC, who presently works as a professional church consultant. After a few conversations concerning Greenwood Baptist Church's needs and the parameters of the demonstration project, Mr. Rose agreed to serve as a technical advisor for Greenwood Baptist Church.

Although acquiring a professional coach was not a stated goal, I felt it necessary to find someone who could advise me professionally on matters of church administration and entrepreneurial skills development. American Baptist Churches of Metropolitan New York suggested I speak with Reverend Dr. Michael Cox with whom I have subsequently developed a coaching relationship.

**Evaluation of Goal 2:** As stated above, six members agreed to serve on and/or consult with the strategic planning team: Ms. Valerie Price Ervin; Ms. Michelle Broady; Ms. Hazel Powell-Massey; Ms. Denise S. Jones; Ms. Brenda Provost; and Ms. Karyn Velez. Their biographical information is included in Appendix E.

Likewise, biographical information for Mr. Tony Rose and Reverend Dr. Michael Cox are located in Appendix E.

### **Goal #3**

Goal 3 broadens strategic sessions to involve congregational leaders and members in a coordinated process of values clarification, envisioning, and action planning towards reorganizing.

**Evaluation of Goal 3.** As the transformational project is four months into a multi-month process, there are no results to report on strategies numbers one through three pertaining to:

- 1) initiating the congregation wide envisioning process
- 2) utilizing small groups to strategize congregational reorganization around
- 3) common areas of ministry and mission affinity.

However, strategies numbers four and five,

- 4) organize Early Childhood Education (Preschool) Development Committee, and
- 5) assemble Early Childhood Ministry Board of Directors

evaluations will be included under Part 2, Technical Challenge below.

### **Goal #4**

Goal 4 specified implementation of the Greenwood Baptist Church's Strategic Planning and Visioning Initiative with assistance of small groups congregational envisioning reports. Strategy one and three of this goal stipulates strategic visioning team (consisting of current members identified above) draft a multi-month (24 months) plan of strategic goals and defining new ministries around which members will be organized, a strategy similar to Goal 3 strategy 3.

**Evaluation of Goal 4.** These strategies have not been realized as the strategy planning team and Candidate's energies are currently geared towards short and mid-term training and planning for the ORT and initial congregation wide sessions where core

leaders facilitate a similar training/values clarification process as experienced by ORT leadership. Strategy number 2, Early Childhood Education Ministry Development Committee managing phase 1 of project development will be assessed under Part 2, Technical Challenge below.

## **Part 2: Technical Challenges**

Technical solutions are in many ways the “go to,” “fix-it” answers to which most people turn when faced with problems. The difficulty arises when attempting to solve adaptive challenges with technical solutions. The old saying is “use the right tool for the job,” which on the face of it seems a logical response, especially when working on cars, laying plumbing, or fixing dentistry. What is more difficult to discern at times is the kind of job at hand. If one does not understand the job, one is at a loss for tool selection. The long and short of it is adaptive challenges require adaptive solutions and technical challenges require technical solutions. More than often, as Heifetz et al. indicate, situations are a combination of both which necessitate all stakeholders devote time to learning as much as possible about their situation.<sup>310</sup> In such cases the leader or leadership must fulfill the role of diagnostician, figuring out what can be solved using current know how and what deep changes are required and what potential losses are involved. (It is critically important to note that “[w]hat people resist is not change per se, but loss.”<sup>311</sup> Technical challenges, as significant as they can be, are powerful tools for creating motivation, critical mass, and reshaping organization infrastructure as they call upon the expertise and ingenuity people bring and already have. This is incredibly

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<sup>310</sup> Heifetz, *Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 19-23.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid., 22.

liberating as it gives an organization substantive projects to wrestle with and accomplish as deeper – possible protracted - adaptive challenges are identified and engaged over time. Transformational leadership requires determining what tasks are essentially adaptive and pursuing those, and determining what is technical and guiding and delegating those oversight responsibilities. Delegation is not abdication; it is making best use of and aligning human resources in the interest of organizational efficacy since transformational leadership requires significant oversight of system-wide changes that full attention to technical matters would otherwise derail in time. The tension for transformational leadership is to adroitly dance on the periphery of adaptive challenge and administrative obligation, the qualitative difference between being an adaptive leader and an “authority figure.”<sup>312</sup>

### **Goal #3**

Goal 3 extends strategic sessions to involve congregational leaders and members in a coordinated process of values clarification, envisioning, and action planning towards reorganizing. And strategies 4 and 5 involve member participation in significant technical projects requiring specialized expertise. The Early Childhood Education Ministry project began prior to the demonstration project and cannot be considered officially part of it. However, results of the project’s progression are rendered as they reflect development of a significant aspect of Greenwood Baptist Church’s vision and strategy.

**Evaluation of Goal 3.** Six Greenwood Baptist Church members and the pastor form the preschool development ministry or team which was assembled January of 2012 (Members’ biographies are listed in Appendix E). Members investigated and considered

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<sup>312</sup> Heifetz, s *Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 25-28.

the benefits of 501c3 designation and acquisition of articles of incorporation versus operation of preschool as a ministry of the church; interviewed and selected an architect experienced in preschool design and development; and vetting of attorneys as the project's representative. The team successfully hired an architect who produced a feasibility study of the church's facility and planned preschool (see Appendix C); the architect served as the team's agent to ascertain construction budgets rendered by two competing, potential construction managers; and is presently serving as the church's agent, bringing her firm's resources to bear to acquire New York City Department of Buildings permitting and producing renderings to aid the team in acquiring financing for its 1.9 million dollar project, which will operate as a ministry of the Greenwood Baptist Church, Incorporated.

Subsequent to the formation of the Early Childhood Education Development (Preschool) team, an Early Childhood Education Ministry Board was assembled. This board will be responsible for crafting the preschool's philosophy, curriculum, hiring an educational director and staff, and for overseeing the day-to-day operation of the preschool. This team is presently meeting approximately once a quarter as the physical development process continues.

#### **Goal #4**

Goal 4 strategy #2 called for the preschool education board planning for the grand opening of the school in fall of 2012, which did not happen as project development is in process.

**Evaluation of Goal 4.** The team conservatively projects a fall 2014 opening date as financing must be secured while the church acquires all necessary permits and certificates for the project. No questionnaires were administered to evaluate the degree of

congregant's satisfaction with the preschool project as the congregation has twice by unanimous vote directed the team to pursue the development of the preschool. The team reports to the congregation quarterly on its progress.

### **Friday Night Fellowship**

An unexpected development from the ORT process is the 2013 advent of Friday Night Fellowships that replace Greenwood Baptist's traditional mid-week bible study and prayer meeting paradigm. Several members of the strategic planning team determined, based on low mid-week participation rates; church demographics; and schedules, the mid-week time frame was anachronistic and failing to meet members' needs. A technical solution involved determining, by way of surveying, the number of persons willing and available to meet Friday nights. Each Friday entails a different activity that's repeated month to month; e.g., study night, movie night, praise night, activity night. The ministry is designed and run by members who sign up in advance to fulfill set ministry roles and responsibilities. The ministry began February 2013.

### **Next Steps**

A few strategies have not been met, mostly all pertaining to congregation wide small group strategic sessions, as the training schedule was delayed for unexpected reasons. Remaining ORT sessions are scheduled for April and May of 2013, with congregation wide sessions beginning May of 2013, at which time members will select the remainder of their session dates in coordination with the Strategic Planning team. By the fall of 2013, a strategic visioning plan will be developed and refined which will later be adopted as the blueprint for Greenwood Baptist's strategic plan at the January 2014 annual meeting.



## **CHAPTER 6**

### **MINISTERIAL COMPETENCIES EVALUATION**

Development of Competencies: Strategies and Evaluations  
The Rev. Reverend Ernest H. Jones Site Team Meeting  
Congregational Ministry/Doctor of Ministry Program  
New York Theological Seminary

**Members:**

Reverend Dr. Glenmore Bembry  
Mr. Jay Gromek, Greenwood Baptist Church Member  
Mrs. Lyn Hill, PhD., NYMH  
Reverend Peter Poulous, CPE Director/Supervisor, NYMH  
Reverend Ernest Jones

**The Process**

The site team for Reverend Ernest H. Jones met as required during year two of the doctoral program to provide an assessment of ministerial competencies, the results of which are listed below:

**The Congregational Competency Assessment Instrument:**

**Theologian: *Continue.***

Reverend Jones is encouraged to continue in this area of competency. He has demonstrated skill and ability as a theologian in his congregational setting as well as in the broader community via ecumenical and interfaith interaction. His careful consideration in regard to scriptural reflection, historical development and impact, interdisciplinary sensitivity, and drive to continually grow are reflected in the demonstration project proposal and affirmed by this committee.

**Preacher/Interpreter of Sacred Texts: *Continue.***

Preaching and interpretation of Sacred Text is one of Reverend Jones's strong points. He has shown proficiency in organizing, interpreting, and engaging his congregation in their spiritual development. Particular emphases are given to helping his congregant connect with the larger community as an expression of their faith. His emphasis on faith development that informs and spurs community involvement has been expressed in larger interchurch and interfaith gatherings.

Creativity in preaching is another of his strong points. Reverend Jones incorporates the use of PowerPoint, multi-media, and an animated style of delivery to communicate the gospel clearly and energetically.

**Worship Leader: *Develop***

Pertaining to the non-preaching aspect of public worship officiation, Reverend Jones shows understanding of the meaning and significance of his faith as a leader of others in worship. This is clearly evident, for example, during the Ordinances of Communion or Baptism as he describes the relation of the rituals to the practicality of a living and growing faith. However, there is room for improvement in terms of coordination and following through with congregants in worship planning, flow of services and timeliness, aspects of worship which would improve the overall experience. Doing so may also necessitate a change in his worship style approach; a change he realizes is necessary for continued growth.

**Prophetic Agent: *Continuel/Develop***

Members of the team have observed Reverend Jones in various settings and agree this is another of Reverend Jones's strengths. Initially, the phrasing of the question raised stereotypical images of a prophet or prophetic activity; however, deeper reflection

revealed instances where Reverend Jones has worked to raise community awareness around issues of current importance. His sermons have embedded analyses that help to identify some underlying social causes, an essential component of prophetic work that encourages moral reflection. A growing area here, though, may be finding ways of communicating that inspire others to work for change. Recent examples of this were Reverend Jones encouraging his congregation to support the work of American Baptist Churches of Metropolitan New York, in helping to build a hospital in an underserved area of northern Haiti. Closer to home, this sense of prophetic engagement was the impetus behind Greenwood Baptist Church providing a clothing ministry and finding creative ways of serving the larger community

**Leader: *Develop***

Reverend Jones's comfort level as motivator of others and good communicator is recognized by this team as a well-developed aspect of his leadership skill set. He displays a willingness and ability to learn from others, from church leadership to the youth in his congregation to community individuals sharing their insights and opinions. Conversely, his ministry is one where he has been willing to share his perspective as well as to hear and learn from others. This is apparent in his written documentation for his demonstration project proposal; in the work he's led in the community as a member of New York Methodist Hospital's Pastoral Care Advisory Committee and its Community Council; and serving in his congregation. Nevertheless, opportunity for growth exists in relation to execution of mid to long-range goals and his willingness to delegate responsibilities to others.

**Religious Educator: *Continue.***

As competency pertains to a religious educator, Reverend Jones does invite his congregants and others to grow in their awareness and spirituality in regards to personal development and understanding larger society. We've observed how he connects the spiritual to the self in both academic and religious settings. In the former, he taught Old Testament at Bloomfield College, Bloomfield, NJ. And in the latter, he has taught and/or led several spiritual retreats; and classes in the congregational setting, often presenting original curricula written for those occasions.

**Counselor: *Develop***

As to pastoral care and counseling, we believe this to be an area of development. Reverend Jones has shown himself able to provide spiritual and emotional support and life direction to persons within his congregation (involving members of all age groups) and, on occasion, to persons from the larger community. As a pastoral care provider, he is generally viewed as open, non-judgmental, approachable, careful and honest in his communications. During his tenure as pastor, Reverend Jones has run spirituality classes and worship experiences designed to help people explore and grow in their spiritual journeys. The areas of counseling he has engaged in include: premarital spiritual direction for engaged couples; marriage and family counseling; parenting workshops; and critical stress interventions. He has demonstrated the ability to recognize some of his personal limitations.

**Pastor: *Develop***

There is obvious overlap between this role and the previous one of counselor, as the pastor is one who provides care and support (soul care) and spiritual nurture and direction. Though the majority of this team are not members of Reverend Jones's

congregation, those who are report he shares the essence of the faith and its rituals with the larger community. He pays attention to those who are new to the congregation, finds opportunities to connect and stay in contact with the homebound and ill. He does not, however, devote adequate time to self-care.

**Spiritual Leader: *Continue.***

Again, this category appears to share points of overlap with some of the previous ones. Reverend Jones does convey a sense of spiritual presence. As noted above, more time in self-care pursuits would be beneficial both personally and in his ministry. Overall, he has been effective in serving as a spiritual guide and leading others into meaningful faith experiences.

**Ecumenist: *Continue.***

This category represents another of Reverend Jones's strengths. His work with other religious leaders to organize community services, convening the Park Slope Clergy Association, bringing religious leaders of various traditions together to keep interfaith dialogue open while keeping his church aware of opportunities to join with ecumenical/interfaith groups such as Brooklyn Congregations United in like-minded activities is well demonstrated.

**Witness or Evangelist: *Continue.***

The Site Team concurs that this is an area in which Reverend Jones also shows strength. We have observed him communicating well both inside and outside his immediate faith community while serving in various neighborhood settings. The "central message" of good news he shares is not restricted or particularized in such a way as to marginalize others. For him, witnessing is not just in word, it is in action: reaching out to the community; looking for ways to open doors for those who are often excluded.

**Administrator: *Attention.***

This is one of Reverend Jones's acknowledged areas needing attention, and one in which he demonstrates some level of discomfort. Areas such as devising strategies and evaluative procedures, delegation of responsibilities to capable people, and finding organizational efficiencies present challenges to him. Reverend Jones demonstrates the ability to keep the mission in view, skillfully involve others in decision making, establishing goals, defining tasks, handling group dynamics and organizational systems. However, greater proficiency among all aspects of church administration, communication, and management are required for his continued development in this area.

**Professional: *Continue.***

It is evident that Reverend Jones brings a sense of excellence to his ministry. His written and oral communicative skills are efficient and effective; given his profession of minister, he has developed good listening skills, a professional demeanor that conveys integrity and competency. He works to keep clear lines of distinction between his life as a pastor and his life with his family. He is a self-starter and others look to him to set the organizational rhythm and depend on him to insure that day-to-day matters and ministries are being managed. Though a few people gravitate to conflict, Reverend Jones has demonstrated the ability to talk things out with others when in conflict with him or others. Often, these conflicts arise as the result of miscommunication, and Reverend Jones has worked with several individuals, committees, and boards to resolve heated conflicts caused by miscommunication or personality clashes. Because most members perceive him as non-judgmental and willing to hear all sides of an issue, he is considered a fair and considerate professional.

## **COMPETENCIES CHOSEN FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT**

Resultant of the year two Ministerial Competency process, Reverend Jones and the team selected three competencies that would serve as particular areas of personal and professional focus for Reverend Jones. Those competencies areas are Leader; Administrator; and Technological Proficiency.

### **Leader:**

To expand personal and professional horizons in becoming a transformational leader of people and congregations. (One who “creates an environment in which the gifts of the Spirit may flourish. She or he is effective in empowering others to realize their own calling or gifts, and facilitates opportunities in which others can flourish.”)

### **Strategies:**

- A. Become immersed in transformational literature of my faith community and transformational theories of the corporate sector.
- B. Identify a list of leadership commonalities from both literature sources and compile a spreadsheet of behavioral qualities to emulate.
- C. Practice repeated implementation of leadership qualities as the strategic planning and congregational transformation process proceeds.
- D. Use *The Competent Pastor: Skills And Self-Knowledge For Serving Well* by Ronald Sisk with leadership and strategic teams.

### **Evaluation:**

Members of the strategic planning team received pastoral evaluation forms near the completion of the writing portion of this project. Reverend Jones leadership was assessed in the area of worship, providing overall day-to-day administration of the demonstration project, and perception as to whether his technological proficiency has noticeably improved over the course of the project. Content for the evaluation was

adapted from Ronald D. Sisk's *The Competent Pastor*.<sup>313</sup> Results from the instrument indicate that worship leading and proclamation remained strong, scoring a rating of excellent for all respondents. Pastoral leadership scored on average as having exhibited some improvement based on a rating scale reflecting a range from needs improvement to improvement. As space was included for written responses, respondents articulated namely the need for increased pastoral delegation of responsibilities; increased accessibility to membership (being present); and the need to exercise mutual accountability between pastor and congregation. Feedback regarding technical acumen suggests respondents had not perceived noticeable increase in technological skills. To insure institutionalization of a pastoral evaluative process, the Greenwood Baptist Church initialized the establishment of a Pastoral Relations Committee that will organize over the course of 2013 to create standards of pastoral review and support. To aid this process, Reverend Jones assembled a listing of transformative leadership practices (Appendix F) to serve as a guide in his continuing leadership development. A site time assessment was not available at the time of this writing.

**Administrator:**

To improve personal and professional skill sets related to leadership and institutional organization. (An administrator is able to define and analyze a task or problem succinctly and clearly, establish concrete and realistic goals, develop strategies that flow out of these goals and initiate a clear, on-going process of evaluation.)

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<sup>313</sup> Ronald D. Sisk, *The Competent Pastor: Skills and Self-Knowledge for Serving Well* (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2005), 39-58.



**Strategies:**

- A. Secure a professional coach to mentor my ongoing professional and personal development.
- B. Familiarize myself with the works of leadership development experts from business and religious sectors.
- C. Attend an executive leadership conference in 2012.

**Evaluation:**

Attendance at a leadership conference sometime in 2012 was a stated goal. During the early months of 2012, research was conducted to find and secure registration at a conference dealing with issues of personal leadership development. Unfortunately, I was unable to locate a conference taking place during the spring, summer, or early fall of 2012. As a substitute, I attended a fall 2012 Webinar on leadership provided by Bates Communications via The CEO Center at [www.bates-communications.com](http://www.bates-communications.com).

Reverend Joseph Anderson, principal of ENERGY OF THE SOUL personal coaching, has provided the following assessment:

The last time we engaged in dialog you voiced concerns with your administrative team. We briefly analyzed your leadership style. Your attention to detail and overall perspective of where you envision the Greenwood Baptist Church community progressing is clear. The community is vibrant and the enthusiasm among the congregants (key players) is indicative of a transformational process.

Many key players of your administrative team expressed an overwhelming gratitude for your leadership and vision. Without reservation they commented on the validity of a “family-connected” closeness that has developed even though there are more than twenty different ethnic groups represented.

Consequently, we examined your perspective and at times your concern. You have made considerable adjustments in handling your critical views. This area of astute self-awareness has truly empowered your congregation to embrace

the vision derived from your community... infused with your guidance and amazing gifts and talents.

Clearly, you are making great progress releasing the need to control, and your leadership has moved to a different level because of your personal development in this particular area of concern.

The Strategic Planning team assessment is in reference to this competency listed above, and the Site Team final assessment is scheduled for April 4, 2013.

### **Technological Proficiency**

To gain skill using web-based tools to communicate and connect with a larger community. This competency area has been identified by the candidate as an area needing professional improvement.

### **Strategies:**

- A. Purchase requisite electronic equipment consisting of a laptop computer with software to enable Internet access, video webcasting, and video editing; acquire video camera capable of recording events and syncing with laptop.
- B. Acquire web access in order to upload and download webcasts and connect to others via social networks.
- C. Obtain webcasting and social networking training from Genius Bar staff, Apple Computers.
- D. Utilize new skills as method for communicating with project participants and broader multi-faith community stakeholders.

### **Evaluation:**

Podcasts of Reverend Jones' messages are now a regular offering on the church's website. Members with the appropriate technical expertise were recruited to modify the church's audio system to interface with the necessary equipment allowing digital recording and now maintain a growing digital library of messages. A written assessment of Reverend Jones' personal technical ability rendered by strategic planning members indicates no increase or improvement of skills during the running of the project.

However, it should be noted that technology was important as detailed use of PowerPoint supports. It was our desire that a technological ministry leadership core would be built around Mr. Jeremy Lintz, who works with technology as a professional graphic artist and Mr. Spencer Burnett, a national award- winning sports photo journalist. Mr. Burnett's personal schedule has not allowed the level of participation necessary to assist in this competency area. The majority of work and time has been spent with Mr. Lintz, who has provided some instruction on advance PowerPoint usage and website management operation.

## **APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**  
**DEMONSTRATION PROJECT PROPOSAL**

RESURRECTION IS NOT JUST FOR PEOPLE ANYMORE:  
CREATING VIBRANT CHURCHES IN PLURALISTIC COMMUNITIES

BY

REVEREND ERNEST H. JONES

DEMONSTRATION PROJECT PROPOSAL

New York Theological Seminary

October 19, 2011

Challenge Statement

Park Slope is an energetic, burgeoning enclave of families, eclectic artists, and entrepreneurs, the veritable lifeblood (wellspring) of culture, arts, and business nestled in the heart of downtown Brooklyn, NY. Here within this bustling nexus of urban community, I serve as pastor in one of the borough's oldest multiethnic congregations. For the past decade, Greenwood Baptist Church has experienced steady organizational decline. Records show within the past three years membership dwindling from roughly 150 to 107 active congregants, a situation now trending towards slow organizational death. This demonstration project will create complementary processes that will engage members in designing and implementing an envisioning plan, outlining Greenwood Baptist's renewal into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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## INTRODUCTION

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on...."

Rudyard Kipling

That quote captures how I felt two years ago. Surprisingly, having served for 11 years as pastor of a historic urban church had not burned me out. At that point I was simply holding on—holding on to nostalgic notions of what I thought being a pastor meant; holding on to crumbling traditional expectations of the work of a pastor that did not connect to the quickly changing world in which I am a part. In short, ministry brought little satisfaction. Nearly gone was the bright-eyed exuberance and energetic enthusiasm, the passion, I experienced when I accepted this call. It had long since faded and morphed into mere ecclesiastical routine. Pastoring was a job, plain and simple. Coming to this realization did not happen all at once. It came about through a process of self-reflection; casual conversations; and, I have to admit, the occasional “complaint session” with my wife, who lent a compassionate yet critical ear. From these interpersonal interactions and internal reflection, I decided to drill deeper. Get a better handle on self-awareness and the internal change I was experiencing.

First, I began with a superficial or surface level of self-awareness or personal assessment. What was I experiencing? How had I come to this present point? What obvious changes in my mindset, psychological markers or problems had I ignored or overlooked on the way? It is quite natural for one to become lost in the body of one’s work—planning, implementing, managing, evaluating, analyzing—and neglect the rigors of similar self-imposed assessments. cursory questions such as ‘what happened?’ proved informative. In time, I had changed. My understanding of ministry, to which I had been called and had meant (and continues to mean) so



much to me, had changed. This is not necessarily a negative or a positive as much as a function of personal theological development and professional growth. Second, I surveyed the ways in which my life had changed (the life stage in which I found myself), the reality of psychological processes that affected my desires, aspirations, and dreams.

For me to convey the sense that life was unraveling in some way is not a fair assertion, and is not my intent here. It is more accurate to say that life for me was in transition, a change of which I was not consciously aware. Though my congregation had experienced a season of growth, it never reached that level of vitality I had imaged and worked for. Economic opportunities were robust at that time and people joined but did not stay as better jobs presented themselves. New ministries were developed but seldom grew deep enough roots to thrive more than a year or two. Energy was devoted to leadership development but commitment levels of leaders were disappointingly low. Still, God blessed and congregational life improved. All this took place, of course, alongside and in contrast to growing family demands. As our children's school and extracurricular activities mounted, my schedule was more flexible than my spouse's. As such, the responsibility of attending many of their functions fell onto my parenting portfolio. Family dynamics aside, I found the organizational disparity at church had become the locus of festering angst and frustration, which feed my growing disillusionment. To compensate, I did the only thing I knew to do: I threw myself even more into the work. In the lingo of Amway house parties and distributor trainings, "I planned my work then worked my plan".<sup>1</sup> I had fallen into a deadly tailspin Robert E. Quinn details as the destructive choice "to stay very busy."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Learn About Our Company," Amway.com, <http://www.amway.com/about-amway/our-company> (accessed December 6, 2011). Rich Devos and Jay Van Andel co-founded the American Way Corporation in 1959 in Ada, MI. The co-founders abbreviated the American Way Corporation to Amway, to reflect the company's mantra of building business "through the power of relationships."

<sup>2</sup> Robert E. Quinn, *Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), Kindle Edition, 18.

Trying to manufacture the ministry I had envisioned, I reviewed ministry models I had been taught; poured over new methodologies I had encountered; devised strategies; preached topically related sermons; and taught spiritual growth materials until my health failed. Not many men 43 years of age develop an aortic aneurysm and live to tell the story. I have.

In the middle of all that activity—which I must say had finally started to take off—my life came to an unwanted stop. After consultations with specialists, I learned the facts: I needed aortic aneurysm repair and aortic valve replacement. If I dawdled I would not be around in six months to celebrate my 44<sup>th</sup> birthday. Those words slowly sank in: I would not be here for my children's high school and college graduations or watch them find their own life's calling. I would not see them date, fall in love, and marry. I would miss the opportunity to spoil my grandchildren. Closer to home, would I be around to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of marriage with my wife? The biggest, significant change of my life was before me. Though sharing my surgical experience would be therapeutic on my end, and I would hope, prove inspirational to the reader, to do so would be a serious digression. Given all the challenges I have faced in life, this one was the greatest, and I met it.

Returning to work after a short recuperative period, I realized much of the momentum had dissipated. Everyone had pulled together; new leadership came forward but the critical momentum and energy had dissipated, palpably so. Full recuperation required nearly two years. It was a full 12 months before I had regained roughly 80% of memory recall and the ability to work an eight hour day. I had to ask myself, 'do I have the will, the energy, to do it again?' Could I work as hard as I had before to rebuild momentum? As I questioned myself, those old lines from Rudyard Kipling's poem, "If," came to mind:

...Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,  
And stoop and build' em up with worn-out tools...

If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
And never breathe a word about your loss...<sup>3</sup>

Nearly another year had passed before I decided I would commit. God had called me and to the best of my knowledge I had not received transfer or new orders just yet. Despite this, depression set in. Doing things over again had not burned me out but something had definitely changed. Though I had determined to rebuild with “worn out tools,” it felt as if the “tools of my trade” had failed me. Soon I reasoned that it was not only my tools that were obsolete and worn; my mental map of the world was also dated even as my environment underwent continual change. My issue was deeper than mere technical application. In the words of Robert E. Quinn, I had “chosen short term personal survival” in favor of longer term stability. In other words, I had determined to just hold on and hold out in lieu of a strategic goal or plan. Addressing mere technological concerns—that is, tinkering with organizational structure—amounted to “superficial changes,” a failure to make any “[significant] change in our basic structures and processes.”<sup>4</sup> Different kinds of tools, an expanded worldview were needed for my situation. Attitudinal and worldview differences were most apparent among our younger attenders and members, the Millennials as some refer to them. It occurred to me their views were most reflective of the sentiments of the surrounding community. The irony of the situation became clear: Functionally, I had a repaired circulatory system yet I had not changed internally. I needed changing, ‘deep change’. This change could not be limited to skill improvement or finding new methods for ministry. My worldview needed expanding. If I embraced and embodied a personal commitment to change as personal development then, maybe, my example

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<sup>3</sup> Rudyard Kipling, “If,” PoemHunter.com, <http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/if/> (accessed December 6, 2011).

<sup>4</sup> Quinn, 16.

could galvanize others to make similar commitments, building to critical mass needed to ignite congregational change. Knowing others in my congregation yearn for renewal has sparked the course of this investigation.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO THE SETTING: A REFLECTION OF THE PAST

The Greenwood Baptist Church of Brooklyn, New York, Incorporated (Greenwood Baptist Church) sits in the heart of Park Slope, a bustling, gentrified neighborhood just southwest of Cobble Hill and Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn. Greenwood Baptist Church began as a small prayer meeting on January 11, 1856.<sup>5</sup> The group was organized into a Sunday School by the Reverend Henry Bromley, a missionary and church planter, at the Mechanics Hall then located on Third Avenue and Eighteenth Street.<sup>6</sup> Two years later in 1858 the growing prayer group and Sunday School mission incorporated under the leadership of the Reverend Horace T. Love as The Greenwood Baptist Church of Brooklyn.<sup>7</sup> Organizational efforts to establish Greenwood Baptist Church could not have happened without the support and sponsorship of The Baptist Temple Church of Brooklyn, NY. (Formerly the First Baptist Church, Brooklyn's oldest Baptist congregation. The historic Baptist Temple Church sold its building to another congregation and was renamed the New Baptist Temple sometime between 2005 and 2007) and the Long Island Baptist Association, formerly the Hudson River Association.<sup>8</sup> Records indicate the "Sabbath School" provided religious education to 400 children and youth, "with an average attendance of

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<sup>5</sup> George A. Coper, "A History of the First One Hundred Years of the Greenwood Baptist Church of Brooklyn, New York," (DMin diss., The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, 1958), 1-3.

<sup>6</sup> Coper, 3.

<sup>7</sup> Coper, 4-5.

<sup>8</sup> Coper, 35. The Long Island Baptist Association is the successor organization to the Hudson River Association of which Greenwood Baptist had been part until the mid-1860s.

150.”<sup>9</sup> The church, located in the Gowanus section of the borough, is named in deference of the Green-wood Cemetery.<sup>10</sup> Be that as it may, it has since provided worship services, missions and ministry for nearly one hundred fifty-three years. The needs of a rapidly growing congregation dictated facilities to accommodate its expanding ministry. In 1860, selection and the subsequent purchase of a plot land near Fifteenth Street and Fourth Avenue committed the congregation to its first edifice. Despite the congregation’s enthusiasm, the reality of the nation’s great conflict, the Civil War, interrupted construction. Church records are virtually silent about the war, other than noting several patriotic young men from the congregation were among those who went to war. Even so, the church dedicated its first building for worship in April of 1863.<sup>11</sup> Construction for the congregation’s second edifice located at Fourth Avenue and Fifteenth Street began in the mid-1870s. Reverend Dr. George Cosper’s, pastor of the historic congregation from 1955-1965, dissertation on the church’s robust history reveals the second edifice sustained serious damage from a storm sometime in the mid to late 1890s. The congregation grew to nearly 800 under the pastorate of Reverend A.G. Lawson and built its second edifice between 1874 and 1875. Determined to build a third edifice rather than repair the old, which had a severely compromised wall that threatened the stability of the entire edifice; and given the fact that the field of missions and economic opportunities were north of the current location; and given the growing numbers of Roman Catholics in the community, many began eyeing the Park Slope neighborhood as the church’s new location.<sup>12</sup> Disagreement arose as to the new location. This, however, was not an option for others who opted to live and worship in the Gowanus-to-

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<sup>9</sup> Cosper, 4-5.

<sup>10</sup> Cosper, 5.

<sup>11</sup> Cosper, 18.

<sup>12</sup> Cosper, 71-74.

Bay Ridge sections of Brooklyn—areas that were not as urbanized and developed as downtown Brooklyn and Park Slope proper at that time. Park Slope served as the home to the Ansonia Clock factory, known as the then largest clock factory in the world employing hundreds of workers.<sup>13</sup> Reverend Dr. Robert Hull, pastor between 1884 and 1906, wanted the congregation to be part of an economically viable, growing community, especially given the movement of many Greenwood Baptist Church members “up the hill” into Park Slope. In short order, the decision was made to enact a search for land on which to build. In 1898, the congregation procured a lot located at Seventh Avenue and Sixth Street designated by city planners as a church edifice site. The congregation’s leaders arranged to worship in the basement of the All Saints Episcopal Church located on Seventh Avenue and Seventh Street until the completion of the new edifice. In that year the congregation moved from their Fourth Avenue building to worship at All Saints. That decision to move to Park Slope ultimately led to the congregation’s fracture and subsequent decline, the second serious falloff in its forty year history.<sup>14</sup> By the time of the new building’s dedication in November 1901 the vast majority of the membership had gone their separate ways, a subject on which records fall eerily silent.

Of the variegated threads running through the fabric of Greenwood’s long history, one leitmotif bears mentioning: the congregation’s demonstrated ability to mediate and adapt to change while holding steady to its faith commitment. George Cosper captures this spirit in quoting Pope Pius XII on Church adaptability: “[R]eligious organizations best serve the needs of

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<sup>13</sup> The Ansonia Clock Factory was founded by Anson Green Phelps’ in 1850 as a subsidiary of his metal importing company Phelps, Dodge & Co., along with two clock makers from Bristol, CT, Theodore Terry and Franklin C. Andrews. This business later incorporated in New York and opened its massive factory operations in Park Slope, Brooklyn, NY in 1879. The Ansonia Clock Factory was a major business that employed hundreds of workers. A brief but fascinating article on the Ansonia Clock Factory can be found at <http://www.antiqueansoniaclocks.com/ansonia-clock-history.php> and in Chris DeSantis’ *Clocks of New York: An Illustrated History*, McFarland, 2011.

<sup>14</sup> Cosper, 74-87.

the times when, on occasion, without giving up their own peculiar spirit, they adapt themselves to changing conditions."<sup>15</sup> Cosper goes on to site instances of this adaptability.<sup>16</sup> Of greater consequence and note, however, has been the congregation's sustained level of social relevance to and in its immediate community, coupled with its exceptional organizational longevity (however, it is only fair to note the congregation now faces one of the most severe and decisive moments of organizational decline in its 153 year history). In point of fact, approximately one hundred years ago (around the fifty-four year mark) Greenwood endured its most difficult moment. The congregation shrank to approximately one hundred regular worshipers. Between 1912 and 1916, conversation focused on merger, uniting 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Baptist Church of Park Slope (another small, struggling congregation) with Greenwood Baptist Church or what seemed as certain closure. Quick successions of pastoral leadership lead to the decision to call Reverend Dr. Francis O'Brien, someone who turned out to be a transformational leader (terminology mine). This call signaled an important shift in the life of the congregation, a shift that brought several decades of organizational stability, spiritual and numerical growth, with expanding ministries and missions.

So much has changed since Greenwood Baptist's inception in 1858: The Green-wood section of town (the section from which Green-wood Cemetery derives its name) no longer exists, having been assimilated by Park Slope to the north and Sunset Park to the south. The country fought the Civil War which nearly brought the union to its knees. America's slaves were emancipated. The City of Brooklyn, once a proud municipality in its own right, is now part of

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<sup>15</sup> Cosper, 29.

<sup>16</sup> Cosper's history of Greenwood Baptist Church takes note of the congregation's willingness to relocate and change worship times as indicative of its overall adaptability.



New York City, boasting a borough-wide population of some 2.5 million people.<sup>17</sup> And within the first forty years of its existence, the congregation had built three edifices, the present being the church's largest worship facility, having been erected between 1900 and 1901.<sup>18</sup> And the list of historical events continues.

In the span of 20 years, from 1912 to 1932, Greenwood's membership rolls swelled three-or four-fold; the church held multiple weekend worship services, offered various Bible studies groups; maintained fellowship groups inclusive of women, men, and couples; ran children ministries and participated in Baptist Youth activities; sponsored home grown missionaries to Japan, Haiti, and Africa; organized two satellite congregations: Memorial Baptist and Grace Baptist Churches of Brooklyn, New York; and boasted a professional choir to meet its public worship needs.<sup>19</sup> During these years of expansive growth and vitality, the congregation adeptly met the change needs of both congregation and community. However, the following 30 year period relay a different story. From roughly 1932-1962—the pre- and post-WWII years, Greenwood experienced significant fall away in membership due to the loss of longstanding families to other communities. Anecdotally, Greenwood Baptist's long-lived church historian shares that the membership exodus coincided with changes in Park Slope's demographics.<sup>20</sup> Most noticeably, the racial composition of the congregation changed during the 1950s, per the

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<sup>17</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. New York Mayor Michael A. Bloomberg is contesting the legitimacy of the Census Department's most recent census conducted in 2010. The Bloomberg administration maintains that boroughs such as Brooklyn and Queens were significantly undercounted and that the population in Brooklyn, by New York City estimates, is closer to 2.6 million residents.

<sup>18</sup> Coper, 84-87.

<sup>19</sup> Coper, 99-106.

<sup>20</sup> Mrs. Marjorie Smith was baptized at Greenwood Baptist in 1932 at the age of 10. She has lived her entire life in the community and has had the privilege of serving as the church's secretary for many decades. She also was the typist and reader for Reverend George Coper's dissertation on the history of Greenwood Baptist Church. She is our oldest living active member and assistant Church Clerk.

congregation's historian, Mrs. Marjorie Smith. Slowly at first but at a continuous pace, persons of color (initially of Caribbean heritage) joined. Greenwood Baptist was changing into a congregation of Euro-Americans, West Indians, South and Central Americans, and Southeast Asians, and remarkably, very few persons of African American descent. By 1965, the congregation had become a multiethnic community of faith with a strong emphasis on foreign missions.

### **Musings on the Present: How Did We Get Here?**

Cultivating a sophisticated appreciation of the past which informs and works to actualize the future is a motif common to many major world religions and cultures. For example, the Divine's pronouncements in Hebrew Scriptures of being the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob serve as vivid reminder to the ancient Israelites of the genesis of their identity and inimitable trajectory of their history (see, for example, Exodus 3:6, 16; Leviticus 26:42; Deuteronomy 1:8), such knowledge helps forge the loosely confederated tribes and clans of Hebrews into a powerful ancient nation.<sup>21</sup> On a more contemporary note, one is reminded of the oft misquoted line of George Santayana's, "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," in this regard.<sup>22</sup> Knowing where one has been helps clarify into what future one must head, a future suffused by ever increasing swells of change.

Demographically, Park Slope has undergone significant change in a short period of time. From early 20<sup>th</sup> century to the early 1960s, Park Slope was largely home to families of Irish and

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<sup>21</sup> John Bright provides an insightful discourse into the development of the early Hebrew people into the Monarchy that was ancient Israel in his seminal work, *A History of Israel* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000).

<sup>22</sup> George Santayana, *Reason in Common Sense: The Life of Reason*, Volume 1 (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 1980).

Italian descent as they replaced the longtime Park Slope brownstone gentry.<sup>23</sup> The turbulent 1960s witness a marked transition of the community as it absorbed waves of Hispanic and black residents. Fortunately, a strong middle class ethic commitment to family and community there remained constant though the community suffered the debilitating effects of urban blight and crime. Former Park Slope residents such as Governor Hugh Carey and others contributed to the neighborhood's viability. He, along with Senator Robert Kennedy, helped organize St. Augustine R.C. Church and St. John's Episcopal Church's efforts to acquire funding to renovate 17 run-down brownstones, which is thought to have sparked Park Slopes modern gentrification in 1966.<sup>24</sup> Today, Park Slope is the 21<sup>st</sup> century epitome of gentrification, although with expected issues here and there.<sup>25</sup> According to Philana Petterson, gentrification set in and steadily grew from the 1970s and 1980s "around the same time as the transformation of the Upper West Side and Soho."<sup>26</sup> At any rate, the neighborhood consistently drew upscale hipsters—then known as yuppies (young urban professionals), Buppies (black urban professionals), and such to its large square footage / lower rent brownstones from upper Manhattan and similar environs. This process continued through the waning years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>23</sup> Philana Petterson, "How Yuppies Discovered Park Slope," *The Real Deal Online*, May 1, 2005. <http://therealdeal.com/newyork/articles/looking-back-how-yuppies-discovered-park-slope> (accessed December 5, 2011).

<sup>24</sup> Liz Robbins, "Before Taking on Albany, Raising 14 Children in 1960s Brooklyn," *New York Times Online*, 2011.

<sup>25</sup> Natalie O'Neil, "Seventh Avenue Is Filthy!" *Brooklyn Paper*, September 20, 2011. [http://www.brooklynpaper.com/stories/34/38/dtg\\_seventhavetrash\\_2011\\_09\\_23\\_bk.html](http://www.brooklynpaper.com/stories/34/38/dtg_seventhavetrash_2011_09_23_bk.html) (accessed December 5, 2011). O'Neil writes a scathing article concerning the build-up of uncollected trash along Park Slope's main corridor, 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Fiscal year 2011 budget concerns were such that special funding via the Doe Fund, which allowed for the hiring of under employed individuals to supplement Department of Sanitation clean-up of the business strip, was discontinued. Residents have been loudly complaining since the summer of 2011 about trash build up and unsanitary conditions.

<sup>26</sup> Petterson.

Thirteen years ago, the Greenwood Baptist Church extended a call to this author to serve as pastor. As part of (as it is referred to in the profession) “the candidating” process prior to that call, the pastoral relations committee provided a tour of the community touting life in Park Slope as a major selling point to relocating to New York City. Access to cultural venues and opportunities, a dizzying collection of restaurants, bistros, specialty shops, the natural beauty and tranquil atmosphere of Prospect Park; and a remarkable transportation system proved a tempting draw. Having young children at the time, we learned some of the borough’s best elementary and middles schools were part of the neighborhood, a point quite pertinent to any couple with young children. More than other Brooklyn communities, Park Slope *appeared* and certainly had the feel of an ethnically diverse place; far more than it does today. However, feel is deceptive—if not misleading. Take the following into account: Year 2000 Census data for zip code 11215 – Park Slope—proved that appearance false and not one borne out by the numbers.<sup>27</sup> People who describe themselves as white have and continue to be the largest group of residents in ‘the Slope’. That diverse “feel,” though not based in numbers (as some would say, ‘perception is reality’), still produced an atmosphere of ethnic plurality concomitantly making the neighborhood a highly desirable place to live and work—which it remains to this day.

Gentrification is not a ‘yellow brick road’ to an Emerald kingdom; it has serious, debilitating effects particularly for those persons who cannot afford to live up to its economic requirements. At the turn of the new millennium, gentrification hit full wave throughout New York City, including Park Slope. Displacement of established families and individuals were increasingly common. Apparently real estate factors such as hyperinflation of rents forced out

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<sup>27</sup> “Fact Sheet,” U.S. Census Bureau Fact Finder, [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?\\_lang=en](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en) (accessed December 5, 2011).

many elderly, working class families, and individuals.<sup>28</sup> Another second wave of displacement came in the form of housing stock speculation and development, accompanied by the ravenous acquisition of every available lot and green space. (Case in point: Park Slope's main north/south thoroughfare, Fourth Avenue. Fourth Avenue stretches from Flatbush Avenue in downtown Brooklyn southward towards Sunset Park and Bay Ridge communities. The redevelopment and commercialization of Fourth Avenue in the early 2000s benefited directly from the City of New York's 2003 rezoning effort, which deregulated northern Fourth Avenue as a residential corridor; this relaxation of zoning restrictions spurred construction of condominiums, apartment buildings, conversion of unused building stock into restaurants and upscale shops designed to attract upscale hipsters and the like). Nearly every small green space and parking lot was acquired and developed into housing. From 2001 to 2005, rents soared as services and businesses jammed into every available store front and new building, all competing to meet the demands of affluent professionals and their families flooding into the community. Many congregations at that time felt overwhelmed by gentrification's effects. Early on, Greenwood focused on helping members who were most at risk of displacement either work with local housing advocacy community agencies in efforts to retain their housing. If retention efforts failed then focus turned to local networking with other community groups to help identify alternative living arrangements. This kind of attention to the needs of people affected by economic and political vicissitudes is a current hallmark of Greenwood's commitment to ministry. At the height of the recession, between 2008 and 2009, the Greenwood Baptist found itself in a relatively strong financial position. The congregation decided it could help both its members and broader community best refocusing on the needs of the most at risk in the congregation and community via the

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<sup>28</sup> From 1999 to 2001 Greenwood Baptist Church saw several longtime families forced to relocate to Long Island, Staten Island and New Jersey due to skyrocketing rents.

establishment of a micro bridge loan ministry. (As the economy worsened in the second half of 2008, freezing the credit market; debilitating the housing market; all while placing more and more middleclass Americans into unemployment, Greenwood Baptist found itself in the unique position of being relatively cash strong. Having some discretionary financial resources at our disposal, the congregation mobilized to help those members affected by the downturn, as well as, people from the larger community. Using a significant sum of money donated and designated for the specific purpose of providing micro loans, Greenwood's diaconate established a bridge loan ministry to help with rents and other crucial living expenses. Also, they determined to increase their benevolence assistance to individuals using undesignated funds. Mission based ministries were ratcheted up, providing increased clothing assistance through a newly created clothing exchange ministry where persons could donate canned and non-perishable goods in exchange for vintage clothing. This ministry proved especially beneficial during the fall as coats, other heavy and warm items, and baby clothes were in high demand. Collected canned goods were both donated to the local food kitchen and distributed to persons in need who came directly to Greenwood for assistance.)

Between 2002 and 2003, Greenwood Baptist Church purchased a demographic study that indicated nearly 25,000 households fell within a half-mile radius of the church.<sup>29</sup> HomesPoint 2 (formerly Realtors) demographic data from 2007 indicates only a modest increase in overall population levels in zip code 11215 since the 2000 Census, going from 63,001 to 65,047.<sup>30</sup> Interestingly enough, this information does not provide a breakdown of numbers along lines of ethnicity. Census data from the year 2000 (most recent information available) indicates Park

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<sup>29</sup> "Demographic Assessment: 461 Sixth Street, Brooklyn, 11215," Outreach Marketing, 2002.

<sup>30</sup> "Park Slope," HomesPoint2, <http://homes.point2.com/Neighborhood/US/New-York/New-York-City/Brooklyn/Park-Slope-Demographics.aspx> (accessed December 5, 2011), formerly Realtors.com.

Slope's largest ethnic group at that time were whites (42,845), followed by Hispanics (16,765), blacks (5,097), and then Asians (3,463).<sup>31</sup> Based on anecdotal observation, I would assume that to roughly be the case today. Using that information, a community assessment was designed, which identified the population and issues Greenwood felt itself best suited to match. Between 2003 and 2005, several new mission initiatives were launched designed to connect with youth and artists.

### **A Reflection on Greenwood Baptist Church**

Greenwood Baptist Church's longstanding historian is Mrs. Marjorie Smith who turned ninety (90) this past January. The years have been extraordinarily kind to Mrs. Smith, who still walks wherever she wishes and enjoys a sharp mind and wit to match. Mrs. Smith recounts being baptized with two hundred other children in 1932 at ten years of age by the Reverend Dr. Francis O'Brien who served Greenwood Baptist from 1916 to 1936.<sup>32</sup> Hers has been a life devoted to God and to Greenwood Baptist, serving as church secretary for many years and also in various leadership positions. She has lived through ten pastorates (including mine), and is a veritable storehouse of knowledge and information. According to Smith, Greenwood Baptist slowly began changing from an all-white congregation in the early to mid-1950s.<sup>33</sup> The change began with a family from Jamaica soon followed by other families of mostly Hispanic descent. From what she shares, the change was welcomed. By the mid to late-1960s Greenwood Baptist considered itself an integrated congregation. As one might expect, members (people largely of

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> "Pillars of Faith, A Living History of Greenwood Baptist Church." This living history effort began in early 2011. The memories and stories of Greenwood Baptist's oldest members' are being collected and memorialized as part of a book detailing the last 80 years of Greenwood Baptist's history. The project's author is Ms. Elizabeth Kuster, former editor of Cosmo Girl magazine and a member of Greenwood Baptist Church.

<sup>33</sup> Marjorie Smith, Greenwood Baptist Church historian.

Irish and German descent) relocated to Staten Island, New Jersey, Long Island, and points west and south, growing number of minorities joined the church.<sup>34</sup> This increase in minorities attending the church may correlate in some ways with larger demographic swings. At any rate, Greenwood Baptist faced a critical challenge (changing demographics) and successfully met it, turning the challenge into opportunity. By the early 1980s the congregation was a reflection of the larger community.

Given the level of political and social activism in Park Slope, communities-of-faith tend to serve as natural centers and conduits for community organizing and networking. Some congregations maintain long term ecumenical and/or interfaith relationships that grew out of community activism in years past. Greenwood Baptist is one of these congregations—to a limited degree. For most of the 1970s and 1980s Greenwood grew more conservative in its theology and independent in terms of its Baptist associational fellowship. It is fair to say that whatever community stature and influence it had in the late 1800s to mid-1900s eroded during the last waning decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Gentrification, and to a lesser degree, diversification transformed the neighborhood. Park Slope is a vibrant community of families, businesses, and artist. Those processes of change that sparked Park Slope resurgence in the last thirty years, ironically gave rise to Greenwood's isolationist attitude, doctrinal purist intransigence, ultra-conservative politics and general negative perception of the wider community and society. Greenwood, like many urban, mainline congregations facing accelerating decline, embraced an attitude of spiritual besiegement. Their insular, isolationist tendencies slowly choked off the congregation from the surrounding community; what the church interpreted as the broader community's religious indifference—if not open hostility—towards organized religious groups

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<sup>34</sup> Smith.



further affected and narrowed Greenwood's sense of self, their communal identity. Circling the wagons, as it were, the church's mission, by default, shifted to self-preservation mode: maintain the group and maintain the properties. Simultaneously, perceived societal hostility towards Christianity and its adherents necessarily formed quasi-apocalyptic proclivities—i.e., they being an embattled lot of believers interpreted current social malaise and dysfunction, growing religious apathy, the apostasy of the faithful with increasing disdain on the one hand; while, on the other hand, they embraced the notion of being among the few found faithful. Maintaining doctrinal purity, embracing conservatism, and eschewing any form of compromise served to further establish their sense of faithfulness and identity. Rather remarkably, under the interim pastorate and forward-leaning leadership of Reverend George Herrick and his wife Gladys (1994-1998), Greenwood Baptist made a very conscientious decision to transform its thinking; find ways to reconnect with the surrounding community; jettison the attitude of besiegement driving it towards congregational death; and find ways to re-engage and embrace the community as a new opportunity for missions and growth.

#### **Framing a New Reality: Modernistic Ministry in a Post-Postmodern World**

Change is hard to define because it is such a broad term. An attested meaning of the word as listed in the *American Heritage Dictionary* is "A transition from one state, condition, or phase to another."<sup>35</sup> Given churches (like other institutions) favor static environments, anything that disrupt the status quo is resisted openly and sometimes surreptitiously combatted. Robert E. Quinn calls such environments, "don't rock the boat cultures."<sup>36</sup> This is a serious dysfunction in an age of postmodernism, a topic to which we will turn shortly. A healthier approach to change

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<sup>35</sup> c.v. "change," *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, New College ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981).

<sup>36</sup> Quinn, 18.

entails embracing it as a way of life. Rather than driving congregations towards isolationism or increasing degrees of doctrinal purity attempting to regain a sense of religious stability, it is better that change spurs congregations—houses of worship of all sorts—to explore, examine and embrace innovative approaches to doing ministry. What is more, today's community complexities are such that unquestioning adherence to the methodologies of the past must be renegotiated and reconfigured to meet contemporary ministry demands and community needs.

Greenwood has not been a community-focused church. Allow me to clarify: the congregation has a tremendous foreign *missions* history, supporting missionaries and efforts around the world and, to a lesser degree, in the Southwest United States. Greenwood Baptist Church's surrounding community has not been the recipient of such energy, finances, and attention since the early years of its inception, however. The church has experienced diversity but it has grown insular nonetheless. (Though unsubstantiated, experience leads me to believe that Greenwood's historic elevated membership turn-over rate in some way correlates to its myopic view of mission and community relationship). Further, community minded individuals find this stance frustrating and narrow and soon leave to find congregations with a more balanced philosophy of ministry.) Ecumenical and interfaith involvement hardly ever ventured beyond the immediate community-wide events, annual days, or special commemorations of varying sorts. Moving beyond the comfort zone of what is congregationally familiar to becoming full participating members of a larger civic group is one of the present, great challenges for our congregation. Attendant to this is the significant challenge is the opportunity of building vital relationships in a highly dynamic and pluralistic community. Park Slope is home to Catholic congregations; synagogues of various traditions; Baptist churches; Dutch Reformed; Greek Orthodox; Presbyterian outreaches; Methodists, Episcopal congregations;

Assemblies of God; Pentecostals of various stripes; Seventh Day Adventists; a Sikh community; and Brooklyn Society for Ethical Community. Given the faith richness of the community and opportunities for creative collaboration, it is surprising current levels of ecumenical and interfaith cooperation in Park Slope are anemic at best. Congregations are more apt to invest time and resources into local projects of their own choosing. As noted above, Greenwood Baptist has historically done so spending considerable resources in recent years in various mission efforts such as helping to build a hospital in Cap Haitian, Haiti; funding a church in Japan; helping provide for a medical missionary in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and a HIV/AIDS ministry for children in South Africa.

### **Postmodernism and Declining Urban Congregations**

Greenwood Baptist's experience of change is not unique, however. More important than merely citing the fact that the world has changed is naming that change, describing what it is and how this current era of change differs from that which the congregation has faced in decades past. What some may identify as changing demographics (diversifying community), gentrification (population displacement), economic forces, growing disregard for traditional authoritative touch points and the like, are compositional aspects of a greater, far reaching phenomenon, a paradigm shift not experienced since the birth of the modern age. Stanley Grenz calls it the "new reality".<sup>37</sup> By name this "new reality" is Postmodernism.

One may rightly pose the question, 'In what ways does this change, this "new reality," relate to congregational decline and transforming those congregations into vibrant, resurgent communities-of-faith? I believe understanding the terrain of the new paradigm lies at the heart of a worthwhile strategic design crafted to reinvigorate dying congregations and position them to

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<sup>37</sup>Stanley J. Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996).

meet the demands and expectations of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Persons such as Ed Stetzer have written extensively about Postmodernism's effects on the religious sector, such as the yawning number of youth who are completely 'unchurched'.<sup>38</sup> As Grenz describes, postmodernism has created a shift away from empiricism to a less stringent view of the world:

But we are moving into a new context. The Western world—from pop culture to academia—is jettisoning the Enlightenment principles that formed the foundation for modernity... In this new context, Foucault's suspicion of every "present order," Derrida's questioning of reason by reason, and Roty's thorough going pragmatism are common parlance, even for those who have never heard the names of these philosophical gurus of postmodern culture.<sup>39</sup>

Grenz further describes this "postmodern ethos" as a "radical skepticism," which is characterized utilizing the following descriptors:

- rejection of the immediate past
- rejection of the metanarrative
- rejection of objective truth
- rejection of correspondence theory of truth
- "...despair concerning the quest to discover all-encompassing truth..." "there is no unifying whole" of reality."
- "all human interpretations – including the Christian worldview – are equally valid because
- "loss of a "center."<sup>40</sup>

These characteristics and factors, in part, constitute the contours of the new reality. Our argument is that every congregational leader must first become aware of the nature of change

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<sup>38</sup> See, for example Ed Stetzer, Richie Stanley, and Jason Hayes, *Lost and Found: The Younger Unchurched and the Churches that Reach Them* (Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Publishing Group and LifeWay Research, 2009).

<sup>39</sup> Stanley J. Grenz, 161, 162.

<sup>40</sup> Grenz, 162-204.

(naming it) then become adept and skillful at navigating and exploiting it both personally and community wide. Change is not necessarily “bad or good.” It simply is. The distance and difference between modernism and postmodernism are not fully irreconcilable. That is to say, one must discover how to “build the bridge as you walk on it,” to borrow a phrase (see Robert E. Quinn’s book *Building the Bridge as You Walk On It*); or understanding where one presently stands in relation to change and discovering the skills and tools needed to creatively move forward.

## CHAPTER 2

### PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF THE CHALLENGE STATEMENT

#### CHALLENGE STATEMENT

Park Slope is an energetic, burgeoning enclave of families, eclectic artists, and entrepreneurs, the veritable lifeblood of culture, arts, and business nestled in the heart of downtown Brooklyn, NY. Here within this bustling nexus of urban community, I served as pastor in one of the borough's oldest multiethnic congregations. For the past decade, Greenwood Baptist Church has steadily declined. Just with the past three years records show membership dwindling from roughly 150 to 107 active congregates, a situation trending towards slow organizational death. This demonstration project will create a process that will involve all members and their families in developing a congregational envisioning plan outlining Greenwood Baptist's congregational and missional renewal for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Continuing study and on-going theological reflection are necessary aspects of the work and life of a minister. In fact, I would argue next to the spiritual discipline of prayer, study and meditation (reflection) make up the three-pronged foundational pillars of a minister's spiritual life. So important is this aspect of study, the Apostle Paul in his second epistle to his protégé and "son" in ministry, Timothy, strongly encouraged him to observe a life of dedicated study (see 2 Timothy 2:15).

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane *and* idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.

This is not a study merely in the academic sense to which we are accustomed. That is, as Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language defines it, "the act or process of

applying the mind so as to acquire knowledge or understanding.”<sup>41</sup> An attested portion of Hebrew Scripture (Ecclesiastes 12:12) conveys the sense of intellectual application along with deep-seated devotion and love of God’s word and learning (GHL).<sup>42</sup> However, Christian Scripture intensifies the idea of studying by incorporating complementary notions of internal drive or determination φιλοτιμεομαι (*philotimeomai*, see 1 Thessalonians 4:11) with ready diligence σπουδαζο (*spoudazo*), as noted above in 2 Timothy 2:15.<sup>43</sup>

As Paul outlined the theological and practical framework from which Timothy would work and reflect on his ministry, it was not lost on the experienced Apostle that the demands of ministry were such that one can become lost in, or more precisely, consumed by the mission to the exclusion of one’s personal development and spiritual care and growth. I argue that the Apostle Paul’s words are just as relevant for clergy today as they were for his “son” Timothy millennia ago.

### **The Lay of the Land**

As a pastor and active participant in local ecumenical and interfaith associations in Brooklyn, NY, I have had the opportunity to work alongside other clergy and religious leaders on various community and social justice efforts. Of the many conversations held concerning community and congregational issues, I have noted a certain strain of conversations that tend to coalesce around recurrent themes. Interestingly enough, no matter what cause or purpose which precipitates meetings, discussion turns to topics related to personal and professional life: self-

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<sup>41</sup> s.v. “study,” *Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language*, 2nd college ed. (New York, N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1984).

<sup>42</sup> William Lee Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament: Based Upon the Lexical Work of Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Pub Co, 1972), page 173.

<sup>43</sup> *BibleWorks 9*, Version 9.0. (Norfolk, Virginia: BibleWorks, LLC, 1998-2011), s.v.,DVD.

care; increasing collaborative efforts to creatively maximize diminishing resources; the need for ‘Sabbath’ or professional/personal development time; and, for lack of a more precise term, the ‘disconnect’ between religious leaders’ understanding and expectation of religious life and that of our communities of faith as they relate to the broader communities in which we live and minister. Of these loosely related topics, the area that I believe is of particular impact, import, and interest consists of discerning the powerful dynamics which drive change and prevailing sentiments related to institutional religion in our communities. The evidentiary genesis of that statement may not be obvious, however. To the point: from the Christian perspective, the very purpose for the Church’s existence is to engage people as declared in the Church’s Great Commission.<sup>44</sup> “The world,” of which the Great Commission speaks is people; people are the primary and integral members of larger communities. If we fail to understand the dynamics which power and drive the communities in which we live then Christianity, Judaism, Islam and the world’s other great religions become irrelevant institutions, unconnected religious, vestigial phenomena of days past. Given the focus of this inquiry is Christianity; I assert the Church, then, truly becomes “Religulous” in the Bill Maher sense of the word.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> The New Testament book of Matthew contains what New Testament scholars identify as the Church’s Great Commission: “Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Mat 28:19 NLT)

<sup>45</sup> Bill Maher, *Religulous*, CinemaNow, directed by Larry Charles (publication place: Thousand Words, LLC, 2008), [https://www.cinemanow.com/MediaManager\\_rq.aspx](https://www.cinemanow.com/MediaManager_rq.aspx) (accessed November 22, 2011).

In 2008, Bill Maher, political humorist/satirist and avowed agnostic, released *Religulous*. The irreverent documentary of his quest to probe the veracity of one of society’s cultural taboos: religion. Rather than simply inquire into people’s motivations for practicing faith or exploring the various expressions of religious practice; his mission is to discredit, demystify, and debunk; to spread the seeds of doubt in the fields of faith practice. As he says, “I’m selling doubt, not certainty. That’s what the other guys (insert: religious leaders) are selling.” Despite its unapologetic tone, Maher touches on several salient points related to the disconnection between religion (all world religions) and real life concerns and experiences of people. Maher’s analyses are often point on in regard to religion’s misuse for personal or national gain and reading scripture out of context to support spurious, if not irrational arguments of varying kinds. Perhaps the most powerful moments in the film come as Maher’s scriptural proficiency and hermeneutical skills far outstrip those of the religious adherent he



“And that’s the first surprise about change: What looks like a people problem is often a situation problem.”  
Chip & Dan Heath

The situational crisis is not easily definable or solvable. If it were someone would have published the definitive book or crafted the authoritative program to address the issue by now. Dealing with religious decline in general, and mainline Protestant Church decline (more on this below) in particular, is a thorny and complex problem. Getting to the heart as to why so many churches across America face decreasing membership rolls, diminishing financial resources, spiritual disaffection, and overall disconnect from their communities and sorting the various contributing factors can be hampered internally by ecclesiastical or denominational structure, denial or recalcitrance of leadership at regional or judicatory levels, resistance from a single individual or power group within a local setting, or denial that a problem even exists with the congregation.<sup>46</sup> As important as it is to understand and come to terms with internal Church dynamics, they are the lesser of the proverbial ‘two evils’. The crux of the matter lay with external factors or those societal causes that are beyond a local church’s sphere of influence or control: the prevailing cultural situation.

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interviews. As a result, it is not so much the fact that religion comes out as a debunked notion holding on long past its date with history’s scrap heap, as the faith adherents he interviews are exposed as people who have thought very little or deeply about the faith they espouse. Even more, many adherents come across as acolytes desperately holding onto to faith (primarily Christian) with little idea of its larger history or relevancy beyond immediate benefits, hackneyed catch phrases, and misplaced religious fervor in spite the historic revelations of the Enlightenment. This film functions as an expose, bringing to question the dogged devotion of those who, against Maher’s line of reason, seek the favor of a god either does not exist at best, or, worse, offers, in Bonhofferian terms, “cheap grace” in terms of granting material wants without the demands of true discipleship being met. In Maher’s terms, the very idea - people and institution - is ‘*Religulous*.’

<sup>46</sup> For an insightful treatment on contributing factors to church decline see: Kevin Harney and Bob Bouwer, *The U-Turn Church: New Direction For Health and Growth* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2011), Introduction.

## Gentrification

As previously noted, Park Slope, Brooklyn has witnessed substantial transformation in a short span of years, relatively speaking. The community's brownstone gentry were replaced by Irish and Italian immigrants during the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>47</sup> Between the 1960s and 70s, Park Slope's population swelled to include waves of Hispanic and black residents. Though the community suffered the effects of urban blight, high crime and drug activity, a strong middle class sensibility survived. Former Park Slope resident Governor Hugh Carey was instrumental in orchestrating the community's revitalization via a collaborative renovation project between St. Augustine R.C. Church and St. John's Episcopal Church.<sup>48</sup> This project is credited with starting Park Slope's gentrification.<sup>49</sup> Having taken firm hold by the mid-1970s, gentrification continued to steadily develop the community and by the late 20<sup>th</sup> century had thoroughly transformed it. At the end of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the neighborhood is the hub of upscale hipsters, young affluent families, businesses, and cultural outlets quite similar to affluent Manhattan enclaves and neighborhoods.<sup>50</sup> Remarkably, the Greenwood Baptist's multiethnic composition changed little as the surrounding community became younger, more affluent, and whiter. This is a positive and a negative: Positive in that Greenwood Baptist offers multicultural faith experience for those who desire diversity in worship. It is a negative in that the congregation became 'time blocked'. That is, it perceived community and societal change as a threat to traditional faith values. Rather than find ways to minister to a changing community, Greenwood

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<sup>47</sup> Philana Petterson, "How Yuppies Discovered Park Slope," The Real Deal.com, <http://therealdeal.com/newyork/articles/looking-back-how-yuppies-discovered-park-slope> (accessed December 5, 2011).

<sup>48</sup> Liz Robbins, "Before Taking on Albany, Raising 14 Children in 1960s Brooklyn," New York Times Online, 2011.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Petterson.

opted to ignore the effects of change on its own communal life and ministry; consequently, the congregation slid into ever increasing isolationism, protectionism, and suffered the ill effects of drifting away from the moorings of its historic denominational identity. As a result, the congregation became stuck on the shoals of decline.

### **A Culture of Decline**

Decline is a dynamic as much as it is an organizational attitude or culture. All organizations have a culture or ways in which they realize their values and it is the role and responsibility of executive management to make sagacious use of every bit of data to improve upon that culture.<sup>51</sup> In so doing they, ideally, produce better products or services as they increase employee satisfaction and shareholder returns. Though the process for churches is somewhat different (no shareholders' bottom line, per se, for which to account or employees to 'satisfy'), the basic idea remains. Church leadership must understand their internal culture and the nature of external forces in order to a) nurture organizational health; b) meet organizational mission and goals; and c) be prepared for the next inevitable challenge. Despite this reality, Churches and Church leadership are slow to adapt to change. In the U.S., churches seem dreadfully slow to admit, confront, and redress the effects of decline on thousands of congregations. The reasons for this are many. We shall examine a few below.

Church decline may be more prevalent than many church leaders think. Though a significant problem, it is more accurate to define it as a mainline Protestant Church phenomenon.<sup>52</sup> In fact, church growth and attendance in the aggregate is up by 1.05 percent from 2009 to 2010 from 147,384,631 to 145,838,339 according the National Council of

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<sup>51</sup> Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based On the Competing Values Framework*, 3 ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), page nr.

<sup>52</sup> Eileen Lindner, *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches 2010* (Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches), 78 Pap/Psc ed. (San Francisco: Abingdon Press, 2010), page nr.

Churches Yearbook for 2011.<sup>53</sup> The question becomes: what is it about mainline Protestantism that Americans find so unappealing? More specifically, what is it about these churches that turns off Baby Busters and Millennials by the millions? Christian surveyor and author, George Barna, queries the U.S. populace on a regular basis trying to understand the dynamics at work (See David Kinneman's work, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church*).<sup>54</sup> Running a Google search yields a rich return of data on church decline, its effects, and reasons. Of particular note, a website called Methodist Corner contains information compiled by one, Allan McGraw, termed "*The Condition of the Church in America—Key Statistics*." Mr. McGraw hosts a website by the name of P2P (Pastor to Pastor) Ministry, and reportedly culled this information as he researched the topic of church decline. Though this is information gleaned from two topically related internet sites, I present this excerpt only and solely for its anecdotal value, and to stress that this topic is one that is bantered far and wide amongst academics, church leaders, laity, and the curious; especially so on the World Wide Web:

**The Condition of the Church in America—Key Statistic**

Compiled by Andy McAdams  
Pastor to Pastors Ministry

1. 1,400 pastors in America leave the ministry monthly.
3. Only 15% of churches in the United States are growing and just less than 5% of those are growing by conversion growth.
4. 10,000 churches in America disappeared in a five-year period. (More current research conducted by Thom and Sam Rainer indicates that rate at 4,000 a year.)<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> National Council of Churches of Christ in USA, *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches 2011 (Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches)*, 79 Pap/Psc ed. (Abingdon Press, 2011), page nr.

<sup>54</sup> David Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church...and Rethinking Faith* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2011), page nr.

<sup>55</sup> Thom S. Rainer and Sam S. Rainer III, *Essential Church? Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts* (Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Books, 2008).

5. The number of people in America that Do Not attend church has doubled in the past 15 years.
6. No more than 38% of the population attends church at all and that's in the Bible belt. The next highest is the Midwest at 25%, West 21% and the Northeast 17%.
8. The vast majority of churches have an attendance of less than 75.
9. In 70 % of the churches in America, the pastor is the only full-time staff person
10. There are almost 100 million unchurched Americans, 11-20% of them claim to be born-again. They have either left the church or never connected for some reason.
14. Only 65% of Americans donate to a place of worship. Evangelicals however 85% donate to their church yet only 9% tithe.
16. Only 60% of Christians say they are deeply committed to their faith, yet 85% of evangelicals make this claim.
19. Less than 50% say that the Bible is totally accurate, yet 60% of those that clam to be born-again.
22. Giving to charities increased in the past decade yet giving to local churches is declining.
24. In his book, "Who Shall Lead Them", Larry Witham said, "20% Of US Churches Have No Future"
27. Leading church analysts Lyle Schaller, George Barna, and Mike Regele stress the alarming truth that over 80% of American Protestant churches are in plateau and/or decline.
28. The typical U.S. Congregation draws an adult crowd that's 61% female, 39% male. This gender gap shows up in all age categories.
31. 88% of children from Evangelical churches will leave the church after High School.
32. And estimated 15 to 20 million people now in America have said they are Christians but they simply don't want to be a part of the church.<sup>56</sup>

Setting aside the obvious shortcomings with McAdams' list, his point is well taken: there is a serious situation which must be faced. As McAdams replies in an email response related to

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<sup>56</sup> Allen McGraw, "The Condition of the Church in America - Key Statistics," The Methodist Corner.com, <http://www.methodistcorner.net/2008/01/02/the-condition-of-the-church-in-america-key-statistics/> (accessed December 21, 2011).

this list, “Most churches are operating almost exactly the same as they did in the 70s and therefore people have difficulty identifying with today’s church. Everything in life is changes, but the church. Of course this also makes people associate the outdated methods with the message.”<sup>57</sup> This does not bode well for mainline Protestant churches if the status quo is maintained as it currently has.

Mainline American Protestantism came into existence as a necessary consequence of change. This is the Mayflower story: Puritans came to a new land to find a new freedom of religion. As the decades passed and social realities surfaced, new “denominations” emerged to meet the change. By the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the strange marriage between Church and Modernism had solidified and mainline Protestantism (in both its conservative and liberal iterations) became the great gate keeper of Civil Religion and its stalwart bastion against change. I contend that it is mainline Protestantism’s dogged reluctance to engage change that drives its decline. As stated above, many other Christian groups are experiencing modest growth levels. According to the National Council of Churches annual yearbook for the past several years, Catholics experience modest growth levels of .5 to a little more than 1 percent per year.<sup>58</sup> Some American Pentecostal groups—Assemblies of God, Church of God—report similar growth levels.<sup>59</sup> Other groups some orthodox-to-conservative Christians consider unorthodox, if not altogether heretical, i.e., Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah’s Witnesses, regularly report

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<sup>57</sup> McGraw.

<sup>58</sup> National Council of Churches of Christ in USA, *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches 2011* (*Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches*), 79 Pap/Psc ed. (Abingdon Press, 2011), and Eileen Lindner, *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches 2010* (*Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches*), 78 Pap/Psc ed. (San Francisco: Abingdon Press, 2010), page nr.

<sup>59</sup> National Council of Churches and Lindner

marked growth increases of two to four percent between 2008 and 2010.<sup>60</sup> Quite telling, however, is the number of what some consider mainline groups that fail to report. One can only speculate as to the reasons established and historic denominations such as Church of God in Christ (Pentecostal); National Baptist Convention, U.S.A.; National Baptist Convention of America; African Methodist Episcopal Church; National Missionary Baptist Convention of America; Churches of Christ; Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America; Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc.; The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; and Christian Churches and Churches of Christ elect to remain silent and/or withhold such data. Nevertheless, none of these entities or the churches they represent is immune to the effects of change and decline. It has been the historic genius of the African American church experience to hold its communities together and for the church to serve as the locus of communal life. Given the change in society even historic churches are suffering the effects of encroaching decline.

Given its growing prevalence within certain large sectors of the American religious landscape, it makes sense to compile some list or guideline as to what characteristics are symptomatic of church decline. As with any diagnostic system, what matters most is not the number of traits present as knowing what therapies of actions are requisite to stem the tide of ill health whether physical or congregational. Seminaries have done wonderful jobs (in most instances) of training pastors to be preachers, teachers, and theologians; of training men and women to be skilled and competent missionaries and practitioners of their gospel craft. But I am reluctant to applaud American seminaries on how well they have prepared church leaders to negotiate change within their congregations and communities. Many pastors and church professionals are competent managers but mediocre diagnosticians of their environments and

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

contexts.<sup>61</sup> As a pastoral therapist or psychotherapist must analyze her patient to determine his malady and related life phase, the demands on the postmodern pastor necessitates understanding not only what is “wrong” with a congregation but comprehending its life stage in relation to its larger context and utilizing that knowledge to guide a congregation towards insight; enlightenment; cure; transformation.

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<sup>61</sup> Paul W. Pruyser, *The Minister as Diagnostician: Personal Problems in Pastoral Perspective* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1976), 13-20, 30-43, 60-79.

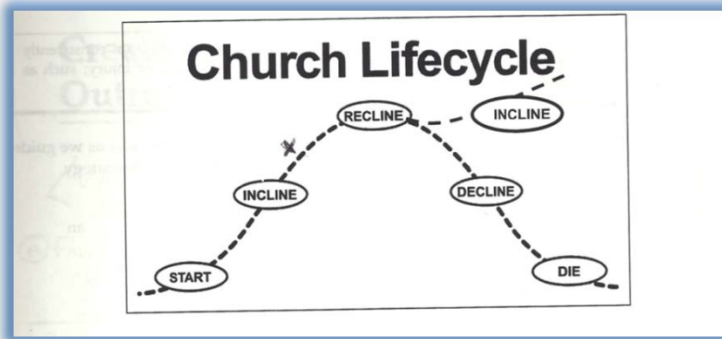


## Life Stages

Gary L. McIntosh in *Taking Your Church to the Next Level: What Got You Here Won't Get You There* describes in detail the course of a congregation's life cycle (See chart 1 below).

McIntosh notes:

"...while there are numerous life cycles that influence the growth of a church, such as the cycle of worship attendance just noted, a local church's own life cycle has the greatest impact on its health and vitality. One of the first people to identify and highlight the life cycle of the church was David O. Moberg. He wrote, "Study of many churches reveals a



typical pattern through which they pass as they emerge, grow, decline, and ultimately die.

Each recurrent growth cycle of stability, experimentation, and integration may be described as involving five stages." His five stages are incipient organization, formal organization, maximum efficiency, institutional stage, and disintegration."<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Gary L. McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level: What Got You Here Won't Get You There* (Philadelphia: Baker Books, 2009), 13.

Chart 1—Congregational Life Cycle produced by Outreach Marketing 2002.

Moberg's observations led Robert D. Dale to further define congregational life cycles in his book *To Dream Again*. In it, he builds the congregational life cycle model on human development models. In summation, "all organizations and organisms move through predictable stages of birth, growth, maturity, and decline."<sup>63</sup> Others besides McIntosh have utilized Moberg and Dale and refined their early models to reflect chart 1 above. In essence, every religious entity, church, experiences a birth or emergent point. The energy, vision, and excitement which is part of a new start, if handled well, propels the new start into incline. Congregations at this point are willing take risks, jettison what does not work out, keep and "institutionalize" that which serves the greater purpose. Pastors or leaders at this point tend to be entrepreneurial and creative. This spirit of newness, excitement acts like a magnet drawing people in. Recline can be read as plateau. Somewhere between incline and recline (read: laid back) the congregation becomes an institution. The entrepreneurial spirit is not prized as much as professional execution and management; ministries must be run; budgets must be maintained; members must be cared for; buildings kept, etc. Churches can exist for many years on a plateau but decline will set in. In decline the institution is kept alive to the detriment of people, especially people who are not official members of the institution. Decline is where congregations become increasingly aware of struggle—membership rolls decrease; money becomes tighter; congregations hire successive pastors believing pastoral leaders is deficit; physical plants become financially onerous; mission giving nose-dives as people seeks to localize their dollars to make immediate community impact; survival takes precedent to vision or mission.<sup>64</sup> McIntosh provides pages of

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<sup>63</sup> McIntosh, 13.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

characteristics of decline in his book *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*. For brevity, I have created a listing reflective of McIntosh's decline symptoms.

1. Few newcomers know the vision or mission
2. Latter generation members have forgotten why the church was founded
3. Older members want to restore former vision & mission to avert falloff
4. Newer members find it extremely difficult to get involved in ministries
5. People assume others will do ministries & work
6. Morale polarized – some are discouraged; others are hopeful for the future
7. Very little sense of corporate identity
8. Talk revolves around the way things used to be
9. Buildings show their age
10. Deferred maintenance becomes problematic
11. Many react by rationalizing that harder work is the answer
12. Church...experiences extreme difficulty finding people to serve
13. Church administration is centered in boards and committees
14. Church as institution becomes primary focus
15. Ministries are problem oriented and focused on eliminating problems rather than starting new ministries
16. Status quo is preferred as opposed to new proposals
17. Insiders' ideas are preferred over those of newcomers or youth
18. Old-timers retire and complain about present generations' lack of involvement
19. Older members long for change but hope change will not affect the way the church operate[s]
20. Pastor hopes for rapid turnaround involving little pain
21. People look for someone to blame
22. Worship attendance steadily declines
23. Members feel worship quality is low and refuse to invite friends
24. Pastor...focuses on management tasks
25. Congregation believes younger, more energetic pastoral leadership is needed<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> McIntosh, 66-69.

The fifth and final, irrevocable, life cycle stage is death. According to McIntosh, congregations can exist for years in the nether region between severe decline and death. However, once a congregation's regular attendance is 20 to 25 people per Sunday—provided they do not have significant sources of income such as endowments or stock portfolios—it is functionally dead, unable to provide for ministries, hiring professional leadership, or renting a facility in which to worship.<sup>66</sup> Tmes and tomes of concentrated work have gone into identifying, characterizing, and documenting congregational decline, what it is and how it affects spiritual life. However, in all the books and articles I have searched and scanned, I scare remember an encounter with one simple, elegant definition attempting to pin it down. Given the enormity of the topic, I appreciate the significance of such a task and, perhaps, why others may avoid giving label to the phenomena in lexicographical form. In retrospect, it may be far more productive and beneficial to list decline's markers than nail it down concisely as a definition. But definitions serve as handles on which one latches and builds complex theoretical structures. They serve as conceptual blueprints. As such, we suggest the following. Premised on the American Heritage Dictionary rendering, decline is understood as 'deterioration,' an idea closely related to that of atrophy. Atrophy is, "1. Pathology. The emaciation or wasting of tissues, organs, or the entire body. 2. Any wasting away or diminution: moral atrophy."<sup>67</sup> *Congregational decline is the gradual loss of organizational health, vitality, and homeostasis predictably leading to death.* What is the way out? In a phrase: actionable hope. Primarily mainline Protestantism is in crisis. Other denominations and Catholicism have faced similar

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> s.v. "pathology," American Heritage Dictionary.

internal and external factors and successfully negotiated them. Actionable hope begins with understanding, understanding what some would call the post postmodern world.<sup>68</sup>

### **Postmodernism: A World View**

It must be stated, Millennial children, the youngest of the postmodern era, share a common mindset, values, and worldview, much as the generations before them. This commonality they share, however, is attributable to postmodernism and the world's increasing secularization, that is, less sense of religious center or place for religious authority.<sup>69</sup> Interestingly enough, Evangelicals (in the doctrinal not politicized sense) have been actively engaging this issue with fervor for some years now. (The National Council of Churches Yearbook for 2010 and 2011 indicates some conservative groups have experienced multiple years of decline. One might expect steady growth among conservative groups similar to third world Church experience. However, the NCC's data shows very modest growth rates in some sectors and declining numbers of worshippers as with the Southern Baptist Convention.)<sup>70</sup> Take Tony Campolo, an evangelical with a Northeast progressive bent. His book, *"Letters to a Young Evangelical,"* is a case in point.<sup>71</sup> As such, his book should be considered one among a growing number of common sense bridge-building efforts,<sup>72</sup> models of finding and articulating the necessary components of commonality that endures and links younger evangelicals (those influenced by the powerful themes of postmodernism) and evangelicals of an older generation

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<sup>68</sup> John D. Caputo, *What Would Jesus Deconstruct?: the Good News of Postmodernism For the Church* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2007).

<sup>69</sup> David J. Bosch, *Believing in the Future: Toward a Missiology of Western Culture*, 1st U.S. ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Gracewing, 1998).

<sup>70</sup> National Council of Churches Yearbook.

<sup>71</sup> Tony Campolo, *Letters to a Young Evangelical* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Basic Books, 2006), page nr.

<sup>72</sup> Robert E. Quinn, *Building the Bridge as You Walk On It: a Guide For Leading Change* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Jossey-Bass, 2004).

who are inextricably tied to their 20<sup>th</sup> Century modernistic worldview. This kind of thinking can prove informative to mainline American Protestantism. If Evangelicals such as Campolo in *Letters to a Young Evangelical*, David Henderson in *Culture Shift*,<sup>73</sup> or Robert Brewer's *Postmodernism: What You Should Know and Do About It*,<sup>74</sup> and so many others, are finding ways to span the ideological differences presented by postmodernity—and doing it from varying departure points—so as to secure a lasting faith legacy for newer generations, why cannot mainline Protestantism do likewise? To survive, the mainline churches must truly understand their changing environment. Church leaders must augment their competencies to include a level of social analysis and comprehension most church leaders 40 or 50 years ago had little reason to consider. Church leaders have to be competent and proficient as socio-religious diagnosticians. To illustrate, consider this health care metaphor.

Church decline, in many respects, is analogous to a complex health care problem. Determining the source of disequilibrium or illness requires investigation and analysis, cataloguing symptoms while determining causes. Such complex investigations entail an internal aspect to establish what is happening within the organism; and an external or environmental side to establish and identify possible primary causal factors, things that may impact an organism's wellbeing. In as much as a clergyperson must consider the internal workings of a congregation, including symptoms, dysfunctions, etc., which requires careful analysis and reflection, similar diligence and effort, must go into environmental study and awareness.

Postmodernism is not a philosophical phase or artistic/societal fad as some might suppose. It is a worldview that emerges from and runs counter to its erstwhile antecedent,

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<sup>73</sup> David W. Henderson, *Culture Shift: Communicating God's Truth to Our Changing World* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998).

<sup>74</sup> R. Brewer, *Postmodernism: What You Should Know and Do About It* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: IUniverse, 2002).

modernism. Though its roots run deep into the 19<sup>th</sup> century it truly burst onto the scene as a way of being on July 15, 1972 as the city of St. Louis, MO's Pruitt-Igoe housing developing was demolished. It was at this point Charles Jencks, architect and art critic, declared the modern era in architecture had ended.<sup>75</sup> As modernism's influence faded, gone too were the presuppositions that once gave it such force as identified with the Pruitt-Igoe housing development. As Jencks and others point out, emphases on straight, austere linear designs; cold, dehumanizing functionality; deference to authority; elevation of the universal to the detriment of local experience; gone.<sup>76</sup>

"Postmodern" does not designate a systematic theory of a comprehensive philosophy, but rather diverse diagnoses and interpretations of the current culture, a depiction of a multitude of interrelated phenomena," explains Steinar Kvale in his essay—"Themes of Postmodernity."<sup>77</sup> As modernism attempted to systematize the world from the western perspective, postmodernism de-systematizes, deconstructs, decentralizes, and neutralizes. Something very uncomfortable to those reared in a world where everything had a label and was neatly 'boxed'. On the philosophical and theological sides, one can begin to comprehend why many in the religious world find this worldview threatening; it deposes any and all meta-narratives; embraces what Kvale calls "a suspicion of suspicion;" celebrates the apparent, that which is as it is, rather than spend energy on discovering ever deeper levels of meaning for meaning's sake.<sup>78</sup> It celebrates the 'pastiche', the eclectic use of old and new in all forms as representative of reality as each

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<sup>75</sup> Walter Truett Anderson, *The Truth About the Truth: De-Confusing and Re-Constructing the Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Tarcher, 1995), 26.

<sup>76</sup> Anderson, 26.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Anderson, 18-25.

culture creates it. This is not a patchwork; it is a synthesis, a compromise. Kvale shares a brief catalogue of themes to which, he believes, postmodernism adheres. They are produced here in their entirety.

*A doubt that any human truth is a simple objective representation of reality.*

*A focus on the way societies use language to construct their own realities.*

*A preference for the local and specific over the universal and abstract.*

*A renewed interest in narrative and story-telling.*

*Acceptance that different descriptions of reality can't always be measured against one another in any final-i.e., objective and nonhuman way.*

*A willingness to accept things as they are on the surface rather than to search (a la Freud or Marx) for Deeper Meanings.<sup>79</sup>*

Perhaps, more relevant to religious professionals is Jill M. Hudson's work, *When Better Isn't Enough*, which tackles the effects of postmodernism from a pastoral leadership and transformative competency perspective. Her view is important because it acknowledges how postmodernism and secularization shaped culture; thus, elucidating our environment and helping clergy appreciate the enormity of sea change in motion. As she states, "Generation X, born between 1965 and 1980, is the first generation that, en masse, was not taken to church."<sup>80</sup> This is not solely about teenagers or young adults. The demographic configuration is large. She goes on to share a couple of contributing reasons: "Their baby-boomer parents turned against organized religion and left the church in droves...A secular culture is no longer friendly to

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<sup>79</sup> Anderson, 18.

<sup>80</sup> Jill M. Hudson, *When Better Isn't Enough: Evaluation Tools For the 21st-Century Church* (Herndon, Virginia: Alban Institute, 2004), 15.



religion in the public school, civic arena, or workplace.”<sup>81</sup> One would do well to heed Hudson’s warning concerning this reality of which recently a greater numbers of mainline churches are becoming aware: “Make no mistake about it—every church leader must understand what has ended and be prepared for what is emerging.”<sup>82</sup> What ended is the modern Church paradigm brought to its height during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century where congregational life ran like a well-oiled machine—exactly! What has emerged is a quagmire of uncertainty for those who are stick locked to the old model. Rescue comes with understanding. Postmoderns no longer believe that forward progress is inevitable (salvation as the end of history?); “science is no longer viewed as the only source of answers. More and more are turning to alternative medicine...No longer are science and religion viewed as adversaries...that not everything can be measured by physical science...No longer are the rules and principles that formerly governed society understood to be passed down through families, religious groups, or community norms...postmoderns turn to one another to define them, not to sources outside their peer groups.”<sup>83</sup> In the vernacular of the day, the church has little “juice”. That is, traditional religious authorities do not command the respect, deference, or place in the world they once did just a half century ago. That’s a large statement. At the local level, the level at which I minister, it means the environment in which I live and work has changed. The people have changed; they have different expectations of churches. Some have no expectations at all of any religious body. Our environment (our community, the locality in which we are situated; from which our members come and live; with which we engage in everyday business transaction) has gentrified, become more secularized, and postmodern; yet the congregation has failed to keep up and thoroughly engage with it in

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<sup>81</sup> Hudson, 15-16.

<sup>82</sup> Hudson, 14.

<sup>83</sup> Hudson, 9-10.

opposition to our own faith mission! In so doing, we, like many others, have flaunted the requirements of our faith to our own demise!

### **How Urgent Is This Problem?**

No religious leader I know has ever anxiously expressed that she/he does not have enough to do. Typically, complaints entail pronouncements about having too much to do with too few resources or capacity to get things done. Such pronouncements are as banal as they are counterproductive. Such statements, however, are sometimes surreptitiously used as social distraction—diverting attention away from vexing concerns or embarrassing dilemmas of a more private nature to amorphous conversation points that become lost in a jostle of topics. That is how things were. Recently, I have observed that pastors are far more apt to share what they perceive as serious changes and challenges in their congregations and communities. The desire is not to commiserate but to discover the extent of what is happening and learn what to do to stem the tide. This is where I was a year ago: desiring to have open conversations with trusted friends and colleagues because I sensed if the situation were not addressed, it would get worse.

Greenwood Baptist Church's very existence hinges on understanding what is happening within the congregation and outside its wall, in society. As anti-spiritual or irreligious as it may sound, without a larger community of which to be a part, every congregation slowly dies.

This is an urgent matter as Greenwood Baptist is experiencing continuous, steady organizational decline. In the past six years active adult membership decreased from approximately 140 to 105, a twenty-five percent decrease in attendance. Our youth ministry has decreased from an average of 12 to 15 youths per week to 4 (several of the older youth are either recent college graduates, working, or are attending college). Children's ministries, once numbering 20 plus per week, averages 8 to 10. Fortunately, our nursery and toddlers' ministry is

slowly increasing. That is just the attendance side of things. Diminishing numbers mean we are unable to provide to our members the opportunities to plug into ministries, the involvement/participatory side. In 2004, records indicate that Greenwood offered approximately eighteen ministries/mission opportunities for member participation (cf. GBC Ministry Fair listing). As of 2010, twelve ongoing ministries/missions opportunities are currently available. Though steps were taken to minimize the effects of losing members who contributed musically and creatively to worship experiences, a noted decline in worship quality has occurred. For many congregations, the life of its ministries revolves around children's and music ministries. Currently, the quality of Greenwood Baptist's core ministries is inadequate. The logical question to ask is why not improve upon those ministries, provide the necessary enhancements and resources they need to thrive? However, the situation is not so easily solved because decline saps organizational morale and sometimes moves a congregation and its leadership to assign well-meaning people into assignments they are really not suited to carry out proficiently. That is to say, the job gets done but not at a high level of execution. The overall effect of such factors creates an atmosphere of spiritual and relational atrophy. Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James H. Furr discuss the benefits of creating healthy spiritual and relational vitality in their book *Leading Congregational Change*.<sup>84</sup> On the financial end, leadership has become consumed with the demands of maintenance and issues of cash flow. Greenwood's edifices are 110 and 115 years old, respectively; and require constant attention and care. It is fair to say that their care and upkeep has consumed the majority of leadership's attention and the congregation's financial resources at a pace that is financially unsustainable. This is happening to the detriment of other financial obligations. As the financial board wrestles with shrinking financial resources the

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<sup>84</sup> Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem and James H. Furr, *Leading Congregational Change: a Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 16-27.

average member has become increasingly focused on the current membership; its care and concerns. For a congregation with a history of insularity, this sort of inward turning could easily prove organizationally fatal. Insularity saps energy; it creates spiritual dislocation; it overshadows the mission and vision. Individuals hold onto hope while investing as little of themselves as possible to stave off disappointment and despair. The situation is urgent because Greenwood Baptist Church is in the throes of decline, what Robert Quinn calls 'slow death'. If this situation is not resolved within the next twelve to twenty-four months, the congregation's membership will continue to decline; talented leaders will continue to leave; long time members will succumb to the disparaging reality that the institution they have loved for so many decades must close its doors, as the church either merges with another congregation or shuts its doors. Continuing as the congregation has for the past few years is untenable as financial resources are quickly diminishing and bankruptcy becomes a looming possibility.

### **The Heart of Change**

The situation Greenwood faces is serious but not hopeless. Though it is complex, it is not unsolvable. Even given the urgency described above, one must not give into panic. Handled properly, urgency can serve as a powerful motivator; something Quinn calls "walking naked into the land of uncertainty."<sup>85</sup> Urgency is a journey that requires leadership, particularly pastoral leadership, willing to speak honestly as to the challenges and risks of inherent of change. Change is about adaptation; and adaptation is something all life on this planet does to survive. Urgency becomes that point of conversation that initiates the processes of adaptation at the organizational level. Organizational change has to be systematic to be successful. According to Quinn, it begins at the personal level, 'the Fundamental State of Leadership'. This state is not so

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<sup>85</sup> Quinn, *Building the Bridge As You Walk On It*.

much a personality trait as it is a temporary state of mind where internal transformation takes place which prepares an individual to serve as a catalyst for significant organizational transformations.<sup>86</sup> Quinn's argues one must transform first before leading any sustained, successful organizational change effort. Personal change leads to a complex relationship of re-visioning, action-reflection, evaluation and revision, risk-taking, and building capacity in others that leads to creating and maintain critical mass for change.

This is a systematic process. Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky argue along similar lines in their book, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*. In basic terms, lasting change requires assessing that which requires adaptive change (philosophical realignment) and distinguishing it from that which requires technical change (difficult problems that requires technical solutions). I find their approach convoluted but informative from a utilitarian perspective, especially related to the use of technical solutions to generate organization morale as deeper philosophical dynamics are carefully addressed and reworked. This is where so many run of course, as statistics suggests two out of three organization change efforts fail.<sup>87</sup> Technical adaptability can be reduced to gimmickry; surface adjustments, which garner attention and some momentum but fizz out for lack of significant deep, philosophical change. The delicate balancing act entails creating opportunities for people to use their technical skills as long term outcomes are established and set in place. Of the many outcomes we foresee for Greenwood as the congregation goes through transformation, the following are of highest importance.

1. Develop a clear, well-articulated vision that captures Greenwood's projected direction for the next 30 years.

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<sup>86</sup> Quinn, 28-39.

<sup>87</sup> Michael Fullan, *Change Leader: Learning to Do What Matters Most* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011).

2. Revise our mission statement to specifically include our local community as a primary point of involvement and faith expression.
3. Plan, develop, and generate funding for an early childhood education ministry to meet the needs of religious education for families with young children.
4. Redesign and revamp our Sunday morning worship service; expand to a second youth oriented Sunday afternoon service offered twice a month.
5. Refocus congregation attention towards community-oriented ministries that welcomes individuals and other community-based organizations into our space.
6. Financial restructure to free up cash flow to support vision through ministries and missions; develop new revenue centers that help support day-to-day operations.
7. Establish, small discipleship/care groups in which personalized mentoring and pastoral care takes place.

Since the concept of success is relative, it would be rather self-congratulatory to declare attainment of any one of these outcomes as success. Establishing metrics that weigh in some fashion the degree of difference these suggested changes have made in the life of Greenwood's members, and perhaps, select community friends, would prove informative. Using Herrington's et al language, an increase in spiritual and relational vitality would indicate the change process has generated positive value for those involved. Partaking in and spearheading this process will provide a range of experiences and firsthand knowledge that should prove personally and professionally beneficial. Even so, I do not assume implementing any change process will guarantee organizational or individual transformation. The only one for whom I can initiate and maintain change is myself. It is by the power of example and dedication to these principles I

expect to influence some to participate in what many experts describe as a very scary, uncertain, circuitous, but rewarding process.<sup>88</sup>

### **Congregational Resources**

Early in my pastorate at Greenwood, we launched a church-wide study published by Lifeway call **Experiencing God**. Of the many studies we have done since, this one remains with me in the most salient of ways. Henry Blackaby and Claude V. King, the study's authors, touched on something that I have found corroborated time and again: God places people where they are needed.<sup>89</sup> It comes as no surprise that much of the technical and professional expertise needed to begin Greenwood's change initiative, provide board trainings, negotiate legal concerns, create plans to leverage the congregation's equity portfolio, insure ongoing professional pastoral care, resides in its membership at current levels! Everyone needed to begin is here. However, to continue and sustain the effort will require outside resources and professionals. We require technical expertise to provide long term fiscal counsel; someone with evaluation skills to help draft measurement implements and interpret data; denominational consultants in congregational transformation; community business persons to partner with us as we reorient to become a community church; local councilmember assistance to help us negotiate the fine points of creating a Christian preschool that reaches out and meets the needs of a pluralistic community. This will not be a process carried out by congregational leadership or the pastor. Everyone must realize the investment and the risk. The risk involves leveraging our portfolio to fund need renovations to establish a preschool and redress facility maintenance concerns (technical adaptation). The investment/risk return comes 36 to 48 months hence as new

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<sup>88</sup> Quinn.

<sup>89</sup> Henry T. Blackaby and Claude V. King, *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God (Workbook)*, Workbook ed. (San Francisco: Lifeway Press, 1993).

ministries, freer cash flow, more people, and higher community profile helps bring new life to the building. As risky as all this is, the alternative is death. Not much of a choice when one considers it. Nevertheless, not all members are convinced a turnaround of the kind I articulate is necessary. This is a potential point of conflict. The literature review I have conducted seems to indicate some change efforts fail because early success of a 'technical problem' is interpreted as proof of change (cf. Quinn's book *Building the Bridge as You Walk On It*). I foresee successful completion of more technical, building related mini-projects will be construed as proof of a successful congregational turn around. People are at times loathe to engage the needed, deep interpersonal work necessary to bring about loving, biblically-based community. I fear this may be the case with some at Greenwood Baptist Church.



## CHAPTER 3

### PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION

#### **Goals and Strategies**

**Goal 1** To raise awareness among congregational leadership then membership regarding the nature and dangers related to slow organizational death and the need to systematically counteract and reverse it.

**Strategy #1** Theological & Educational Preparation Using Messages as Conscious Raising Tool. Design a series of six (6) sermons that will provide biblical models for identifying and confronting slow death, and embracing visionary change as a necessary systematic strategy to address it. (January through February 2012, Jones).

**Strategy #2** Leadership Training in Team Building and Visioning. Assemble core congregational leadership to participate in six (6) leadership training sessions, three (3) sessions devoted building team ethic and capacity; and three (3) sessions designed to increase church life cycle dynamics awareness and the role of group visioning. Actions steps to include assessing ideas and methods used to identify decline and negotiate necessary changes. (February through May 2012, Jones)

**Strategy #3** Raising Congregational Awareness Through History. Conduct a Greenwood Baptist Church history contest (inclusive of age-sensitive categories) which encourages current membership to learn historical church facts and present their findings using

creative and/or entertaining means of presentation; thus helping to bridge the historical identity disconnect that exists between the present congregation and its past (April - June 2012, Jones and Core Leadership Team ).

**Evaluation for Goal 1** Knowledge Assessment. Devise pre- and post-diagnostic/questionnaire to determine members' level of awareness and understanding of church decline and organizational death and implementing systematic strategies for addressing the problem. At least 70% of members will demonstrate an increased knowledge and appreciation for church life dynamics and 80% of leadership will demonstrate increased team building and leadership capacity in their particular settings (June-July 2012, Jones, Strategic Leadership Team, Site Team).

**Goal 2** To identify and recruit a team of five (5) to (7) members willing to provide design and conceptual oversight of Greenwood Baptist Church's 21<sup>st</sup> century strategic planning and visioning initiative.

**Strategy #1** Strategic Planning and Visioning Team Selection. Design deputation standards for strategic planning and visioning initiative members. Persons with demonstrated biblical and theological grounding; expertise and skill in organizational planning; systems management and design comprise core requirements for this team. (February - March 2012, Jones)

**Strategy #2** Professional Congregational Change Consultant. Identify and secure an expert in the field of congregational transformation and change to advise the strategic and visioning process at Greenwood Baptist Church (January-February 2012).

**Evaluation for Goal 2** Completed assembly of strategic planning and visioning team and

acquisition of a professional congregational change consultant (February 2012, Jones and Site Team).

**Goal 3** To involve all levels of congregational leadership and membership in coordinated processes of envisioning, clarifying, reorganizing and implementing transformative change initiative by use of workshops and informational fora.

**Strategy #1** Envisioning “Deep Change.” Strategic planning and visioning initiative members will advise on strategic process development, providing direction on short, mid, and long-term hallmarks. Generation of a 24-month project calendar inclusive of organizational benchmarks and developments necessary for sustained change and its implementation will be central to its functioning (February-July 2012, Jones, Strategic Visioning Team).

**Strategy #2** – Establish congregation-wide practical-collaboration groups where participants learn the envisioning process and implement their new skills in the current setting, moving both individuals and larger group towards congregational transformation (March – July 2012, Jones, Strategic Visioning Team).

**Strategy #3** – Encourage congregants to envision the kind of ministries/missions they desire. Record congregational responses and categorize them into related themes and present results of achievable organizational outcomes. Based on personal affinity to outcomes, reorganize congregation around areas of interest (April-July 2012).

**Strategy #4** – Early Childhood Education Ministry (Preschool) Development Committee. Assemble committee of qualified members to guide of Greenwood’s preschool ministry. The Committee will a) pursue acquisition of 501c3 status for the school; b) initiate articles of incorporation & by-laws process to create legal entity through which

Greenwood will implement the ministry; c) select an architect from a pool of candidates to develop said preschool; d) interview and select an attorney to aid with acquisition of 501c3 status; e) identify and nominate qualified individuals from Greenwood Baptist's congregation to serve on the newly formed board of directors of 501c3. This preschool is part of the congregation's transformative process; in that it realigns the church with its original mission from 110 years ago (Christian education for children); and it generates momentum and boosts (January – March 2012, Jones)

**Strategy #5** – Early Childhood Education Ministry Board of Directors. Upon completion of the Early Childhood Education Ministry Development Committee's charge to initiate the preschool development process; collaborate with the newly formed board to insure continued development of Greenwood's Early Childhood Education Ministry structural renovations and educational development (March-December 2012, Jones, Strategic Visioning Team).

**Evaluation for Goal 3** 80% of congregants will demonstrate engagement in an area of strategic/vision design and congregation's vitality quotient will be measured using a series of progressive spiritual/relational questionnaires and successful launch of 501c3 board of directors (January-July 2012, Jones).

**Goal 4** To implement the Greenwood Baptist Church of Brooklyn, NY, Inc.'s Strategic Planning and Visioning Initiative with assistance of congregational envisioning reports.

**Strategy #1** – Strategic Visioning team and candidate will carefully draft a 36 month plan of strategic goals for congregational transformation (February-July 2012, Jones).

**Strategy #2** – Board of directors will manage phase 1 development of preschool leading to grand opening in fall of 2012 and oversee phase 2 development, which entails

complete renovation of church's lower level necessary to expand school into foreseeable future (Jones, 501c3 Board of Directors).

**Strategy #3** – Congregational envisioning groups will discern and define potential new ministry areas for Greenwood. Members will be organized around their particular ministry (ies) of interest. Implement the reorganization process (March-July 2012, Jones, Strategic Visioning Team).

**Evaluation for Goal 4** The development of a cogent, fully implementable strategic plan that outlines the guiding vision, realistic mission, clear goals, and needs-based ministries capable of helping the Greenwood Baptist Church of Brooklyn, NY, Inc., achieve its newly stated vision and mission. Questionnaires will be administered to evaluate degree of congregants' satisfaction with direction of church with respect to the strategic plan, development of preschool ministry, and reorganization of membership around ministries of interest. 80% of congregants will adopt the 2011 strategic plan as our operating document at the congregations January 2013 annual meeting (July 2012-January 2013, Jones).

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

#### **Biblical/Theological**

*What biblical and theological models of transformational leadership exist in the context of changing environments or situations? This examination will begin using Peter and James in the New Testament book of Acts as change confronts the early church.*

#### **Organizational Management Theory**

*What lessons and values can congregations glean from change management theory and literature regarding the pull and influence of postmodernism on religious bodies in particular?*

#### **Identity Theory**

*In what ways can and does a congregation's self-understanding and communal self-image affect its ability to engage meaningful spiritual formation and changing missional environments?*

## CHAPTER 5

### EVALUATION PROCESS

The corpus of organizational and strategic management research available to the pedestrian reader is overwhelmingly extensive. Contributors to this prolific field include institutional-based researchers to lifelong practitioners to specialty consultants and business gurus, all flooding the marketplaces with the benefits of their content rich research, experiences, and perspicacious observations. Even so, the real test of theoretical and practical efficacy comes not in project design, implementation or execution of their advice, theorems, and models but in the final product: programmatic assessment and outcome evaluation. To put it briefly: how well did it work? The heartbeat of my project encompasses resetting and retuning the organization rhythms of a one hundred-fifty years old congregation that (somewhat like its half century old pastor), is set in its ways and used to comfortable operational patterns using some proven ideas and approaches of transformation or “deep” change. Evaluation of my Demonstration Project on deep congregational transformation through envisioning and reorganization will employ the utilization of three methodologies.

#### **METHOD 1—STRATEGIC ENVISIONING LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENTS**

Given the centrality of strategic envisioning and planning at the leadership level, the core leadership team will be integral to working with the Candidate during this process, which seeks to examine and understand the current congregational (organizational) reality; determine ministry and effectiveness and relevance in light of the congregation’s present vision and

mission statements; discern direction for future growth through planned prayer sessions and reflection using Herrington, Bonem and Furr's book, *Leading Congregational Change*, and form in partnership with the Candidate and congregation a ministry vision that will set the course of Greenwood Baptist's ministry for the next twenty-five years. The team will be required to render a critical assessment of the planning content as well as the process itself every 45 days over the life of the planning process. As part of the assessment, strategic envisioning and leadership team members will provide self-assessments of their own leadership growth as part of the process. Site Team members with professional development experience will monitor the assessments and provide evaluative direction.

#### **METHOD 2—CONGREGATION LEADERS ASSESSMENTS**

An aspect of the strategic process is to improve team-spirit capacity of congregation leaders. The congregation has solid core leadership; however, to maintain a long range goal of organizational restructuring calls for deepening the development quotient of leaders through a series of team building workshops using Herrington, Bonem and Furr's book, *Leading Congregational Change*, as one of a limited set of resources for this purpose. Using stated goals and strategies outlined in my Demonstration Project, as part of the team building workshops, "spiritual and relational vitality" questionnaires, training process evaluations will be employed to help leaders rate their level of development and the usefulness of the training model. Responses from earlier questionnaires will provide Site Team and the Candidate with data, which may detect the need for training model adaptations and gauge leaders' sense of training effectiveness.

#### **METHOD 3—CONGREGATION-WIDE ASSESSMENTS**

The process of transformation includes an entire congregation not just leadership or vice-versa. The impetus for transformation begins with a sense or notion of urgency that causes



organizational discontent, the palpable feeling that all is not as it should be. Seeking and finding constructive and forward looking means by which to address discontent provides the initial momentum for transformation, or change. As the congregation engages its own series of workshops and small group breakouts, “spiritual and relational vitality assessments” along with questionnaires designed to gauge members’ level of strategic process satisfaction and integrity of the ministry envisioning progression will be implemented every 45 days of the project.

CHAPTER 6  
MINISTERIAL COMPETENCIES

Development of Competencies: Strategies and Evaluations

Minutes of the Rev. Reverend Ernest H. Jones Site Team Meeting

Multifaith Ministry/Doctor of Ministry Program

New York Theological Seminary

March 31, 2011 at New York Methodist Hospital

**The Process**

At the initial meeting of the Site Team, March 17, 2011 around 3 p.m., members officially met and were apprised of the role of the site team by Reverend Ernest H. Jones, who also chaired the meeting. As part of the group's discussions the task of assessing the Candidate for Ministerial Competencies related to the program was introduced. It was decided that the team would meet Thursday, March 31, 2011 at 4 p.m. in the office of Dr. Lyn Hill. Rev. Jones would email the Ministerial Competency document to each member of the team at least one week before the meeting. The initial meeting was dismissed around 5 p.m.

The site team for Reverend Ernest H. Jones meets again on Thursday, March 31, 2011 at the office of Lyn Hill, PhD. Vice President for Communication and External Affairs, New York Methodist Hospital. Members of the site team reviewed the ministerial competency document

provided by New York Theological Seminary and assessed Reverend Jones' ministerial competencies based on that document.

Members Present:

Reverend Dr. Glenmore Bembry (via speakerphone)

Mr. Jay Gromek, Greenwood Baptist Church Member

Mrs. Lyn Hill, PhD., NYMH

Mrs. Cynthia Holton, Principal P.S. 107

Reverend Peter Poulous, CPE Director/Supervisor, NYMH

Reverend Ernest Jones

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss and evaluate Rev. Jones' competencies relative to his project. The committee used the Multifaith Ministerial Competency Assessment Instrument (MMCAI) provided by the Seminary. The goal of Reverend Jones' project was to develop and/or enhance professional development opportunities for clergy members in Park Slope. Following this introductory discussion, the committee moved through the MMCAI, discussing each section and deciding on the appropriate designation for each category. The findings of this assessment were summarized by Dr. Lyn Hill and submitted to Rev. Jones on behalf of the Site Team.

During the summer of 2011, Reverend Jones's demonstration project focus changed from one of professional development for religious leaders in the Multi-faith Tract to strategic planning and congregational change in the Congregational Tract. Having discussed the rationale for this shift in focus with Dr. Dale Irwin, Dr. Wanda Lundy, and Dr. Keith Russell, the official decision to permit Reverend Jones' tract and demonstration project change came on or around August 11, 2011. Subsequent discussions with Dr. Lundy in August and September of 2011,

uncovered the need to reassess the earlier Ministerial Competencies from March 2011 and replace it with the Congregational tract Ministerial Competency. Enlarging the Site Team to include more persons from the congregation was also discussed but not mandated.

The Site Team met November 4, 2011 at 4 p.m. The focus on the meeting was detailing the extent to which the project has changed. Though members were apprised individually over the summer as to a change in focus, the purpose of this meeting was two-fold: 1) to explain the extent to which the demonstration project proposal was changing; and 2) provide opportunity for Site Team members to resign given the initial idea onto which they had agreed to serve had changed. Surprisingly, four of five members decided to stay on the committee. The team met again November 30, 2011 at 4 p.m., at which time the committee discussed and evaluated Reverend Jones competencies according to Congregational tract criteria. As the writing of the demonstration project proposal progressed, certain members from Greenwood Baptist Church have been approached to ascertain their interest and availability to serve either on the site team or in some other capacity with the project. To date, one other person as agreed to serve on the site team and two have agreed to serve in other capacities. The results of the November 30<sup>th</sup> Site team discussion follows:

The Congregational Competency Assessment Instrument:

**1. Theologian: *Continue.***

Reverend Jones is encouraged to continue in this area of competency. He has demonstrated skill and ability as a theologian in his congregational setting as well as in the broader community via ecumenical and interfaith interaction. His careful consideration in regard to scriptural reflection, historical development and impact, interdisciplinary sensitivity, and drive to continually grow are reflected in the demonstration project proposal and affirmed by this

committee.

**2. Preacher/Interpreter of Sacred Texts: *Continue.***

Preaching and interpretation of Sacred Text is one of Reverend Jones's strong points. He has shown proficiency organizing, interpreting, and engaging his congregation in their spiritual development. Particular emphases are given to helping his congregant connect with the larger community as an expression of their faith. His emphasis on faith development that informs and spurs community involvement has been expressed in larger interchurch and interfaith gatherings.

Creativity in preaching is another of his strong points. Reverend Jones incorporates the use of PowerPoint, multi-media, and an animated style of delivery to communicate the gospel clearly and energetically.

**3. Worship Leader: *Develop.***

Pertaining to the non-preaching aspect of public worship officiation, Reverend Jones shows understanding of the meaning and significance of this faith as a leader of others in worship. This is clearly evident, for example, during the Ordinances of Communion or Baptism as he describes the relatedness of the rituals to the practicality of a living and growing faith. However, there is room for improvement in terms of coordination and following through with congregants in worship planning, flow of services and timeliness, aspects of worship which would improve the overall experience. Doing so may also necessitate a change in his worship style approach; a change he realizes is necessary for continued growth.

**4. Prophetic Agent: *Continue / Develop.***

Members of the team have observed Reverend Jones in various settings and agree this is another of Reverend Jones's strengths. Initially, the phrasing of the question raised stereotypical images of a prophet or prophetic activity; however, deeper reflection revealed instances where

Reverend Jones has worked to raise community awareness around issues of current importance. His sermons have embedded analyses that help to identify some underlying social causes, an essential component of prophetic work that encourages moral reflection. A growing area here, though, may be finding ways of communicating that inspires others to work for change. Recent examples of this were Reverend Jones encouraging his congregation to support American Baptist Churches of Metropolitan New York, work to help build a hospital in an underserved area of northern Haiti. Closer to home, this sense of prophetic engagement was the impetus behind Greenwood Baptist Church providing a clothing ministry and finding creative ways of serving the larger community

**5. Leader: *Develop.***

Reverend Jones's comfort level as motivator of others and good communicator is recognized by this team as a well-developed aspect of his leadership skill set. He displays a willingness and ability to learn from others, from church leadership to the youth in his congregation to community individuals sharing their insights and opinions. Conversely, his ministry is one where he has been willing to share his perspective as well as hear and learn from others. This is apparent in his written documentation for his demonstration project proposal; in the work he's led in the community as a member of New York Methodist Hospital's Pastoral Care Advisory Committee and its Community Council; and serving in his congregation. Nevertheless, opportunity for growth exists in relation to execution of mid to long range goals and his willingness to delegate responsibilities to others.

**6. Religious Educator: *Continue.***

As competency pertains to religious educator, Reverend Jones does invite his congregants and others to grow in their awareness and spirituality in regards to personal development and

understanding larger society. We've observed how he connects the spiritual the self in both academic and religious settings as well. In the former, he taught Old Testament at Bloomfield College, Bloomfield, NJ. And in the latter, he has taught and/or led several spiritual retreats; and classes in the congregational setting, often presenting original curricula written for those occasions.

**7. Counselor: *Develop.***

As to pastoral care and counseling, we believe this to be an area of development. Reverend Jones has shown himself able to provide spiritual and emotional support and life direction to persons within his congregation (entailing members of all age groups) and, on occasion, to persons from the larger community. As a pastoral care provider, he is generally viewed as open, non-judgmental, approachable, careful and honest in his communications. During his tenure as pastor, Reverend Jones has run spirituality classes and worship experiences designed to help people explore and grow in their spiritual journeys. The areas of counseling he has engaged in include: premarital spiritual direction for engaged couples; marriage and family counseling; parenting workshops; and critical stress interventions. He has shown the ability to recognize some of his personal limitations.

**8. Pastor: *Develop.***

There is obvious overlap between this role and the previous one of counselor, as the pastor is one who provides care and support (soul care) and spiritual nurture and direction. Though the majority of this team are not members of Reverend Jones's congregation, those who are report he shares the essence of the faith and its rituals with the larger community. He pays attention to those who are new to the congregation, finds opportunities to connect and stay in contact with the homebound and ill. He does not, however, devote adequate time in self-care.

**9. Spiritual Leader: *Continue.***

Again, this category appears to share points of overlap with some of the previous. Reverend Jones does convey a sense of spiritual presence. As noted above, more time in self-care pursuits would be beneficial both personally and to his ministry. Overall, he has been effective serving as a spiritual guide in leading others into meaningful faith experiences.

**10. Ecumenist: *Continue.***

This category represents another of Reverend Jones's strengths. His work with other religious leaders to organize community services, convening the Park Slope Clergy Association, bringing religious leaders of various traditions together to keep interfaith dialogue open while keeping his church aware of opportunities to join with ecumenical/interfaith groups such as Brooklyn Congregations United in like-minded activities is well demonstrated.

**11. Witness or Evangelist: *Continue.***

The Site Team concurs that this is an area in which Reverend Jones also shows strength. In terms of being one who communicates well inside and outside his immediate faith community, we have observed him doing so while serving in various community settings. The "central message" of good news he shares is not restricted or particularized in such a way as to marginalize others. Witnessing for him is not just in word, it is in action: reaching out to the community; trying ways to open doors for those who are not often included.

**12. Administrator: *Attention.***

This is one of Reverend Jones's acknowledged areas needing attention, and one in which he demonstrates some level discomfort. Areas such as devising strategies and evaluative procedures, delegation of responsibilities to capable people, and finding organizational efficiencies are of concern. Reverend Jones demonstrates the ability to keep the mission in view,



skillfully involve others in decision making, establishing goals, defining tasks, handling group dynamics and organizational systems. However, greater proficiency among all aspects of church administration, communication, and management are required for his continued development in this area.

**13. Professional: *Continue.***

It is evident that Reverend Jones brings a sense of excellence to his ministry. His written and oral communicative skills are efficient and effective; given his profession of minister, he has developed good listening skills, a professional demeanor that conveys integrity and competency; and works to keep clear lines of distinction between his life as a pastor and his life with his family. He is a self-starter and as such others look to him to set the organizational rhythm and depend on him to insure day-to-day matters and ministries are being managed. Though few people gravitate to conflict, Reverend Jones has demonstrated the ability to talk things out with others when in conflict with him or others. Often, these conflicts arise as the result of miscommunication, and Reverend Jones has worked with several individuals, committees, and boards to resolve heated conflicts caused by miscommunication or personality clashes. Because most members perceive him as non-judgmental and willing to hear all sides of an issue, he is considered a fair and considerate professional.

**COMPETENCIES CHOSEN FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT**

**1. *Leader:*** To expand personal and professional horizons in becoming a transformational leader of people and congregations. (One who “creates an environment in which the gifts of the Spirit may flourish. She or he is effective in empowering others to realize their own calling or gifts, and facilitates opportunities in which others can flourish.”)

Strategies:

- A. Become immersed in transformational literature of my faith community and transformational theories of the corporate sector.
- B. Identify a list of leadership commonalities from both literature sources and compile a spreadsheet of behavioral qualities to emulate.
- C. Practice repeated implementation of leadership qualities as the strategic planning and congregational transformation process proceeds.
- D. Implement use of *The Competent Pastor: Skills And Self-Knowledge For Serving Well* by Ronald D. Sisk with leadership and strategic teams.

Evaluation:

- A. Solicit feedback from core team members using a leadership behavioral instrument to rate improvement or lack thereof over time, a sort of pastoral performance review process.
  - B. Feedback from Site Team:
    - 1. Reflection based on Candidates written reflections
    - 2. Helping candidate assess areas of focus and additional reflection.
2. **Administrator:** To improve personal and professional skill sets related to leadership and institutional organization. (An administrator is able to define and analyze a task or problem succinctly and clearly, establish concrete and realistic goals, develop strategies which flow out of these goals and initiate a clear, on-going process of evaluation.)

Strategies:

- A. Secure a professional coach to mentor my ongoing professional and personal development.
- B. Familiarize myself with the works of leadership development experts from business and religious sectors.
- C. Attend an executive leadership conference in 2012.

Evaluation:

- A. Receive written assessment from professional coach on skill development.
  - B. Request written evaluation of professional development from leadership review team from congregations (team to be selected).
  - C. Review assessments with site team members
3. ***Technological Proficient:*** To gain skill using web-based tools to communicate and connect with a larger community. This competency area has been identified by the candidate as an area of professional improvement.

Strategies:

- A. Purchase requisite electronic equipment consisting of a laptop computer capable of internet access, video webcasting, and having necessary video editing software; acquire video camera capable of recording events and syncing with laptop.
- B. Acquire web access in order to upload and download webcasts and connect to others via social networks.
- C. Obtain webcasting and social networking training from Genius Bar staff, Apple Computers.
- D. Utilize new skills as method for communicating with project participants and broader multifaith community stakeholders.

Evaluation:

- A. Production of library containing podcasts/webcasts of messages and bible studies.
- B. Evaluate efficiency of technology with Jeremy Lintz and Spenser Burnett, technological specialists and members of Greenwood Baptist Church.
- C. Request written assessments from core team members regarding effectiveness of technological component of project.
- D. Review written assessments with site team.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: TIMELINE

DATE	TASK/ACTIVITY	TOOLS TO COMPLETE TASK	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
12/11	Site Team Sign-Off on D.P. Proposal	Project Proposal/ Letter to Dr. Russell	Site Team
12/11	Approval of Proposal By Director		Dr. Russell/ Dr. Lundy
1/2012	Mt. Manressa Retreat	Book mid-March date for Officers Team Bldg Seminar 1	EHJ/IP
1/2012	Meet With Advisor	Bi-weekly	EHJ
	Confirm Lifeway Consultant	Xn Education Reorganization	Lintz & Lintz
	Meet with Professional Coach	Strategic Planning & Personal Growth (Competency)	
	Con't Research on Theological Question		EHJ
	Research Questions 1 & 2		EHJ
	Collaborate with Advisor x2	Copy of approved Demonstration Proj.	EHJ
	Assemble Strategic Leadership Team Members		EHJ
	Assemble Early Childhood Education Ministry Team	Obtain permission to use webinars on leadership	EHJ/Dept. of Health
	Collect Architects & Attorney Resumes organizing vetting	ECEM Team	EHJ
	Confer with Karyn Velez – Trainer	Work through details of 1 <sup>st</sup> team bldg. session	EHJ/KV/BP
	Design Survey of Ministry Desire Instrument	Professional Coach/ “Leading Congregational Change	MC/EHJ
	ABC USA Board of General Ministries Meeting	January 20-23 Orlando, Fl	Dr. R. Medley
	Meet With Advisor	Bi-weekly	EHJ

DATE	TASK/ACTIVITY	TOOLS TO COMPLETE TASK	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
	Mt. Manressa Retreat	Sign up leaders for Team bldg. session 1	IP
	Assemble Worship & Technology Ministry (W&TM) Members		EHJ
	GBC Annual Mtg. Booklet Printing	Staples	IP/KV
	Training Supplies	Staples	IP
	GBC Annual Mtg.	January 29, 2012	IP/EHJ/KV/JR
	Early Childhood Education Ministry Team (ECEM) Mtg	Review Resumes/ Commence Incorporation Process & C of O	JHR/EHJ
2/2012	Meet with Site Team	Copy of approved Demonstration Proj.	EHJ
	Meet With Advisor	Bi-weekly	EHJ
	Professional Coach		MC/EHJ
	Coordinate Joint mtg. of Site and Strategic Leaders Teams	Project proposal/ Timeline	EHJ/Site Team
	Design Survey of Ministry Desires	Review Instrument to Congregation	EHJ
	ECEM Team Mtg	Select Architect	JHR/EHJ
	Xn Education Re-Organization: Lifeway Consultant	Workshop materials Provided by Lifeway	Lintz & Lintz
	Mt. Manressa Retreat	Confirm use of Mt. Manressa for training	IP/EHJ
	Meet With Advisor	Bi-weekly	EHJ
	Collaborate with Albans Institute -	Permission to use webinars	EHJ
	W & T Collaborate with Web Specialists	Jeremy Lintz, Spenser Burnett	EHJ
	Finalize Mt. Manressa Registration	Call in final numbers	IP
	LENT 2012		

DATE	TASK/ACTIVITY	TOOLS TO COMPLETE TASK	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
3/2012	PROJECT BEGINS		
	Assemble Leadership Training Participants in seminar	Mt. Manressa Retreat, SI, NY	EHJ/Primary Tier Leaders
	ABC General Board	Chicago, IL	RM
	Meet With Advisor	Bi-weekly	EHJ
	Team Building with Core Leaders Session 1	Interpersonal dynamics	K. Velez/EHJ
	ECM Team Mtg.		
	Worship and Technology Ministry		
	Meet With Advisor	Bi-weekly	EHJ
	Albans Institute	Include webinar in Team building seminar	EHJ
	Collaborate with Webinar Organizer	Jeremy Lintz to train for webcast	EHJ/JL
4/2012	EASTER 2012		
	Meet With Advisor	Bi-weekly	EHJ
	Strategic Leadership Team		
	Church-wide strategic Planning Session	Strategic Leadership Group 1/	EHJ & Site Team
	Survey of Ministry Desires	Survey Instrument to Congregation	EHJ
	Executive Leadership Conference	Seminar on improving management/leadership skill sets	EHJ
	Team Building with Core Leaders: Session 2	Meaning of Leadership <b>Leading Congregational Change</b>	K. Velez
	ECM	Evaluate Inc./501c3 process/ Educational Curricula	JHR

DATE	TASK/ACTIVITY	TOOLS TO COMPLETE TASK	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
	Church-wide strategic Assembly	Workshops /Ministry Focus Groups	Leadership Group 1
	W&TM		EHJ
	Meet With Advisor	Monthly (?)	EHJ
5/2012	ABC Metro Spring Rally		JS
	Strategic Leadership Team		
	Fully Implement Goal 3: Strategic Reorganization of Congregation	Ministry Focus Groups Start/	
	Core Leadership Teams	<b>Leading Congregational Change</b>	EHJ
	Brandeis Uni.	Pick Up Son from School	
	Professional Coach		MC/EHJ
	ECEM		JHR
	Strategic Leadership Team		
	Meet with Advisor		EHJ
6/2012	Site Team Report		EHJ
	ECEM Meeting		JHR
	ABC Board of General Ministries	Valley Forge, PA	RM
	Strategic Leadership Team		
	Fully Implement Goal 3: Strategic Reorganization of Congregation	Ministry Focus Groups	
	Review Evaluation with Team		
	Meet with Advisor		EHJ
	ECEM	Preschool Open House	JHR



DATE	TASK/ACTIVITY	TOOLS TO COMPLETE TASK	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
	Core Leadership Teams	<b>Leading Congregational Change</b>	EHJ
7/2012	Writing	Begin collating material from Strategic Reorganization Process	
	Site Team Report	Review initial materials with Site Team	EHJ/Site Team
	Core Leadership Teams	<b>Leading Congregational Change</b>	
	ECEM Meeting		JHR
	Writing	Research draft	EHJ
	Strategic Leadership Team		
	Strategic Reorganization of Congregation	Ministry Focus Groups	
	Research	Assessment	EHJ
	Meet with Advisor		
8/2012	Goal 1	Assessment/paperwork	EHJ
	Goal 2	Assessment/paperwork	EHJ
	Goal 3	Assessment/paperwork	EHJ
	ECEM Meeting		JHR
	Brandies Uni. Professional Evaluation	Return Son to School	MC/EHJ
	ECEM Meeting		JHR
9/2012	LABOR DAY		
	Writing		
	ECEM Meeting		JHR
	Strategic Reorganization of	Ministry Focus Groups	

DATE	TASK/ACTIVITY	TOOLS TO COMPLETE TASK	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
	Congregation		
	Core Leadership Teams	<b>Leading Congregational Change</b>	
	Review with Site Team/advisor		
	GBC Sunday School Kick-off		HM
	ECEM Meeting		JHR
10/2012	Gospel Concert		JS
	ECEM: Preschool Opening		JHR
	Strategic Leadership Team		
	Strategic Reorganization of Congregation	Ministry Focus Groups	
10/2012	Write DP		EHJ
11/2012	ABC Metro Annual Meeting		JS
	Write DP		EHJ
	ABC Board of General Ministries	Valley Forge, PA	RM
	THANKSGIVING		
12/2012	Write DP		EHJ
	Strategic Reorganization Evaluation	Strategic Leadership Team/Professional Coach	
1/2013	Preliminary Draft of DP		EHJ
2/2013	Submission of Demonstration Project/Dissertation		EHJ
4/2013	Presentation of Demonstration Project		EHJ
5/2013	Graduation From NYTS		EHJ

## APPENDIX B: BUDGET

DATE	TASK/ACTIVITY	TOOLS TO COMPLETE TASK	Cost/Funding
1/2012	Approval of Proposal By Director		
	Meet with Advisor		\$10
	Professional Coach		TBD based on hours
2/2012	Collaborate with Advisor	Copy of approved Demonstration Proj.	
	Meet with Advisor		\$10
	Meet with Site Team	Copy of approved Demonstration Proj.	Donation
3/2012	Collaborate with Albans Institute	Permission to use webinars	Donation
	Meet with Advisor		\$10
	Collaborate with Auburn Seminary	Develop Workshop Format	Donation
	Collaborate with Webinar Organizer	Jeremy Lintz	\$250-\$500
	Meet with Site Team		Donation
	Equipment Check	EHJ/JL	\$500
	<b>Leading Congregation Change Text &amp; Workbooks</b>	15 copies	\$550 (Books to be purchased by participants)
4/2012	Select and Assemble Participants	Focus Groups	Donation
	Meet with Advisor		\$10
	Meet with Site Team		Donation
	Executive Leadership Conference		\$1000
5/2012	Strategic Reorganization		Donation GBC
	Meet with Site Team		Donation

	Meet with Advisor		\$10
6/2012	Site Team Report		
	Meet with Advisor		\$5
	Meet with Site Team		Donation
	Review Evaluation with Team		
7/2012	Writing	Begin collating material from FGs	
	Site Team Report	Review initial materials from FGs	
	Writing	Research draft	
	Meet with Advisor		\$5
	Research	Assessment	
8/2012	Goal 1	Assessment/paperwork from FGs	In-kind
	Goal 2	Assessment/paperwork from FGs	In-kind
	Goal 3	Assessment/paperwork from FGs	In-kind
	Site Team	Assessment Review	
9/2012	Writing		
	Full DP Draft 1		\$50
	Review with Site Team/advisor		
10/2012	Rewrite		
11/2012	Rewrite		
12/2012	Rewrite		
1/2013	Prelim. Draft		
2/2013	Final Drafts		\$500-\$700

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**APPENDIX B**  
**OFFICERS' ROUNDTABLE SESSIONS**



Saturday, October 20, 2012  
Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd  
Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, NY

***GBC Officers Roundtable 2012***  
**Greenwood into the Future:**  
Discerning Where God is Leading

***“Facing A Hopeful Future”***

“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”

*Jeremiah 29:11 New Living Translation*

## Agenda

### Morning Session

9:45 – 10:00	Assemble
10:00 – 10:45	Worship
10:45 – 11:00	The Round Table Idea
11:00 - 11:45	Session One: Servant Leaders
11:45 – 11:55	Break
11:55 – 12:30	Session Continued
12:30pm	Lunch

## Agenda

### Afternoon Session

1:00 - 1:10	Devotion
1:10 – 2:00	Session Two: Servants on the Way
2:15 – 2:30	Questions
2:30 - 2:50	Prayer Circles
2:50 – 2:57	Remarks
2:57 – 3:00	Closing Prayer

Worship!

This is the Day the Lord Has Made!

***Opening Prayer: Litany of Shared Purpose***

**Lord, God, we give thanks for Your gifts to us.**

**As you have so freely given to us and lovingly made us what we are, we now freely give back to you in the substance of our lives.**

**Lord, where our hearts and hands are closed, open them. Where our resolve is weak, strengthen us.**

**We pray that we shall be good managers of the wonderful gifts and responsibilities you have given, sharing with others the light that Jesus has given to us, ever giving and serving from a willing heart.**

## Reflections from the Heart: Sharing Our Journey

Homily ~ "The Practice of Ministry"

Scripture: Jeremiah 29:13

### *Reflection Circles*

- 1) Do you feel you can discern God's Will?
- 2) Are God's priorities your priority?
- 3) How can one practice discernment?

*Psalm 37:23-24; 73:23-24; 119:105*

### *Prayer*



# ***Knights of the Round Table Or Round Table of Faith***

Who They Weren't?

Why a Round Table?

What is our purpose  
today?



## ***Leadership Envisioning***



***Purpose: Through teaching, mentoring, and ministry opportunities, we develop servant leaders who serve the Church and the world.***

## **Positioning Exercise**

- I am ...
- I see my ministry as ...
- My involvement is important to GBC's mission because...

## Theological Basis:

**“Iron is sharpened by iron, one person is sharpened by contact with another.”**

Proverbs 27:17 NJB

## Quotation:

**Servant leadership starts with a vision and ends with a servant heart that helps people live according to that vision.**

Ken Blanchard\*

\*Kenneth Blanchard is an American author and management expert. His book *The One Minute Manager* has sold over 13 million copies and has been translated into 37 languages. [Wikipedia](#)

## Leaders Together: “Uplift”

**The V formation of geese offers us important lessons in leadership:**

- 1. A flock of geese properly aligned creates “team uplift” that adds 71% flying range than each bird flying alone.**
- 2. Geese Survival requires that they anticipate future needs on a regular basis and consider both short and long-term needs.**
- 3. A flock of geese takes turns leading the V and to do so must be clear about the destination.**
- 4. The V formation remains flexible depending on the task or challenge before them.**
- 5. Geese motivate each other through constant encouragement with an acute ability to listen to one another.**
- 6. Geese support and protect a member of the flock who is sick or wounded – they never leave a team-member behind.**

As members of the flock, as leaders in our V formation, others are watching how we deliver team uplift and they will usually weigh us in the following areas:

1. Appearance.

This goes beyond outer garments. It's demeanor and disposition. Pleasant people are refreshing to be around.

Be the kind of servant leader people enjoy being around.

2. Serving under pressure.

What comes to the surface when under pressure is a key to your character. From a Christian worldview, we can be angry, disappointed, or downright aggravated about something. But that shouldn't always be one's demeanor.

Being a servant leader means allowing "Christ to shape our response." As Paul mentions, nothing happens to us that is not common to humanity. Christ empowers our un-common response!

(See 1 Corinthians 10:13)

### 3. How we deal with people.

People should be our primary focus in our homes, churches, workplaces and community. As leaders, we are often responsible for influencing others and as such, we need to be able to discern people's...needs and know how to successfully match people's gifts and passions with the tasks that need to be completed.

Servant leaders learn the best ways to motivate each other, taking into consideration everyone's uniqueness.

### 4. Communication

Communicating is a two way street. It is one part information dissemination, one part mission advancement, one part vision casting, one part team input, ownership and empowerment and then served on an encouraging and motivational platter in a safe and non-judgmental environment.

Servant leaders are encouraging listeners who are willing to be patient, expect to be challenged, sees the best in the people they serve and look for teachable moments in every situation.

## 5. Our competence.

Effective leaders pursue competence in all they do and labor to gain the trust of those who work alongside and follow them. They continuously work to improve their skills and knowledge and to set a positive model for others.

Servant leaders seek to better understand their work as leaders and how to strengthen, encourage and promote the Kingdom of God.

Slides # 10-15 adapted from "The Fellowship of the Red Bandana: Leadership Retreat,"  
<http://www.redbandana.org>.

**Afternoon Session:**  
*Servants on the Way*



## Setting the Stage

***“Too many churches are hiding behind what is convenient and comfortable while an entire generation is being left in the dark.”***

*7 Practices of Effective Ministry*

	1980s	1990s	2000s
Church Attendance	↓	↓	↓
Skepticism (Generational)	↑	↑	↑
Xn College Students L.C.			70%
Indifference to Trad. Church			↑
Perception of Church as irrelevant		↑	↑
Church Adaptation	→	→	→

*7 Practices of Effective Ministry*, page 143.

## ***This Afternoon's Objectives***

- Assess direction:
  - Previous accomplishments
  - Revisit our visioning process
  - Evaluate our effectiveness
  - Pastor's Vision Statement (committee of the whole)

## **Brainstorming: What Are Our Core Values?**

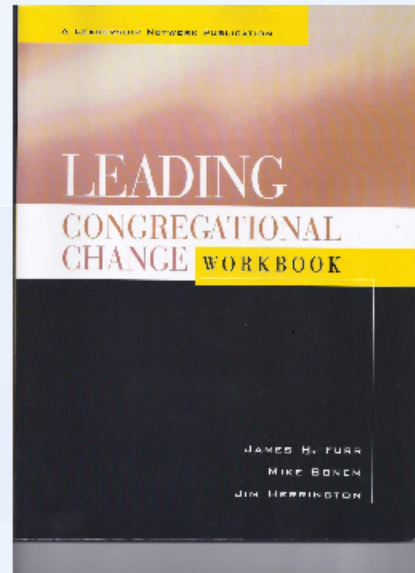


## **Strategic Questions:**

- What values do you think should define/represent who we are?
- Of those, what values should shape our ministry together?
- How do we make use of them?

# A Resource For Our Leaders: Leading Congregational Change

The concepts  
in Leading  
Congregational  
Change by  
James H Furr,  
Mike Bonem,  
and Jim  
Herrington, I  
believe will help  
guide  
Greenwood's  
transformation.



## In Brief...

### Part 1 - Vitality & Learning Disciples

- Encountering God's Holiness
- Experiencing God's Grace
- Embracing Unity
- Engaging Community

### Part 2 - 8 Stages of Change

- Personal Preparation
- Urgency
- Vision Community
- Discerning Visionpath
- Communicating the Vision
- Empowering Leaders
- "Just Do It"
- Alignment





## An Easy Map

Framing how to accomplish our vision is one of the hardest things we will do as GBC's leaders.

Most individuals have a grasp of their job responsibilities. But doing a job and sharing how to accomplish a job are different things. This is true of, say, a team or a ministry. Successful teams excel because each member learns to do and share. Ministries are effective when leaders package goals into easy practices that everyone knows and understands.

### Cardinal Directions:



- What's Next?
- Who's involved in doing...what?
- Who's keeping score?



## Final Thought

The concepts and practices designed to help make us more effective. They aren't programs or an ideal model of how to work with God through our transformation process. Remember that is this a process not a program. As such, we have leeway to study, rehearse, implement and adjust and align ourselves as we discern God's leading. This is indicative of adapting to a new way of life, and that's exactly what it is. Learning a new way of doing things that creates a new GBC culture.



## Officers Round Table

### Session 2 Summary

November 18, 2012

Session 2 of Greenwood Baptist's Officers Round Table met Saturday, November 17, 2012 at 10 am.

After reviewing the morning's agenda, we entered into a season of worship as it foundational for deepening our spiritual life together. During which, time was allotted for a brief word study-based reflection from Colossians 3:12-17 entitled "Sharing Our Journey." Three words from that passage drew special attention and were linked with the spiritual practice of discernment; which was also explained as a process of 'affirmation', 'confirmation', and 'alignment'.

Pastor Jones transitioned to the informational segment of the session, delving briefly into a few statistics addressing church attendance decline across the U.S., especially among young adults, and the church's responsibility to respond to the Great Commission as found in Matthew's gospel. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19, 20) serving as the touch stone and departure point for all churches prayerfully discerning their particular place in their respective communities. Valerie Price Ervin took lead in the next segment which encouraged participants to share what they perceived as a) their natural talents/skills and b) their spiritual gifts. This segment was termed, "What Do You Do Well?"

Michele Broady facilitated the following segment, "What Are Our Core Values?" Officers were given two handouts: the first handout was a listing of 200 values people hold. Handout number two was a document prepared by Pastor Jones entitled, "Core Values Brainstorming." Consisting of 3 pages – a cover page and two response sheets – Michele instructed officers to first list 3 values most important to them then to list 3 values currently most important to GBC and record their work on response sheet number 1. Next, officers were broken down into three groups and asked to define values they thought were important to GBC. Next, groups reduced their list of values down to three values they felt of most importance and shared their finding with everyone.

To conclude the day's event, participants shared concerns/ideas for inclusion in next ORT session.

Strategic Planning Team: M. Broady, H. Massey, D.S. Jones. V. Price Ervin.  
(K.Velez, B. Provost consulting).





ABBREVIATED OUTLINE

**Saturday, January 5, 2013**  
**Greenwood Baptist Church**  
**Park Slope, Brooklyn, NY**

***GBC Officers Roundtable 2013***  
**Greenwood into the Future:**  
Discerning Where God is Leading

# Agenda

## Morning Session

9:45 – 10:15	Assemble
10:15 – 10:45	Worship
10:45 – 10:55	Reflections from the Heart: A Journey of Discernment
10:55 - 11:50	This Morning's Objectives
11:50 – 12 noon	Survey Results


## Reflections from the Heart: “Sharing the Journey”

Scripture: Colossians 3:12-17

“Put on” –	enduo:	enveloping
“Bearing with” –	anecho:	holding up
“Exhort” –	noutheteo:	encouraging

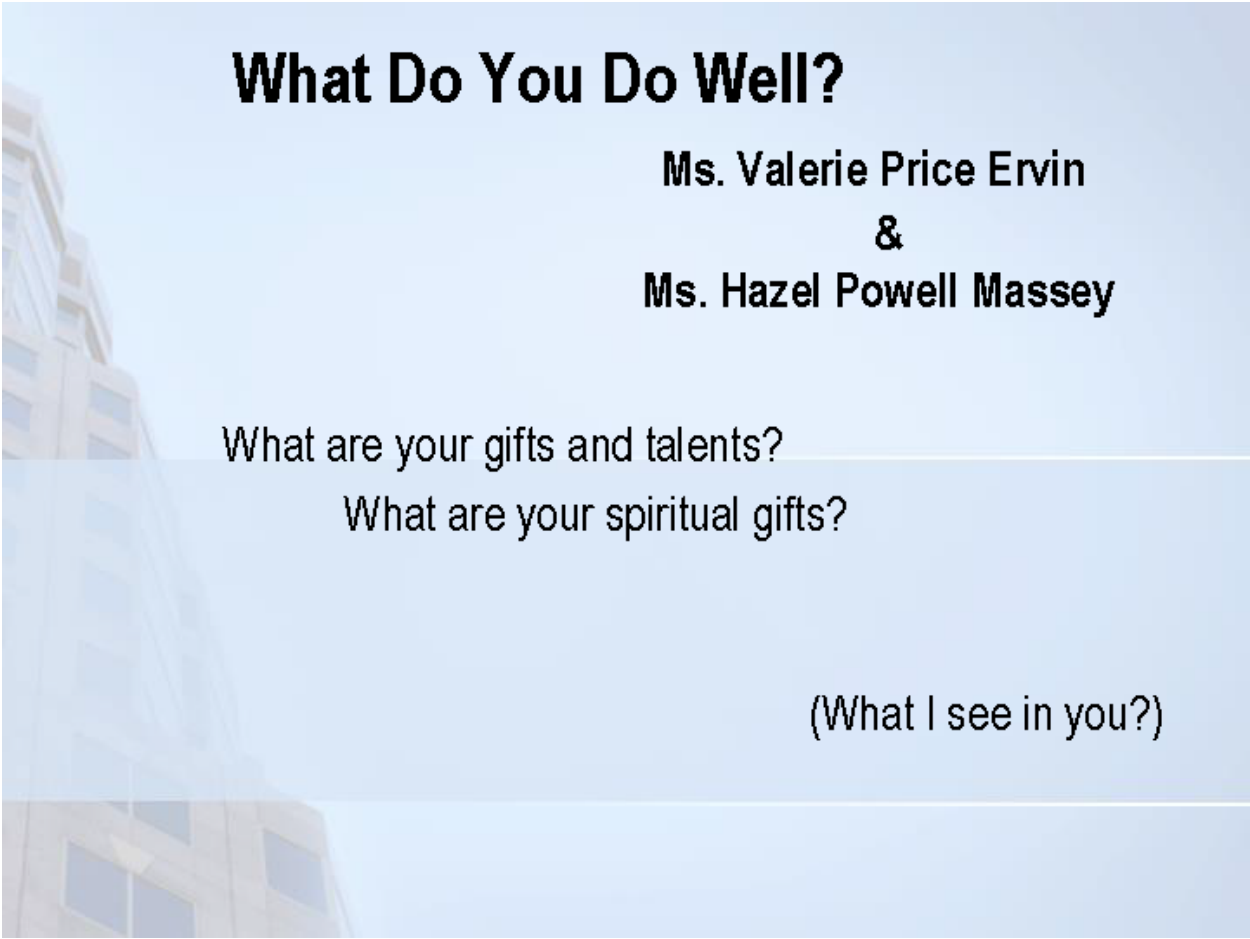
*Discernment (A.C.A.):*

- 1) Affirmation – to make firm; establish*
- 2) Confirmation – to corroborate; support*
- 3) Alignment – to bring into agreement*



## ***This Morning's Objectives***

- Celebration of Gifts!
- Values Are Foundational



# **What Do You Do Well?**

**Ms. Valerie Price Ervin  
&  
Ms. Hazel Powell Massey**

What are your gifts and talents?

What are your spiritual gifts?

(What I see in you?)



# **What Are Our Core Values?**

**Ms. Michelle Broady**



## **Core Values Strategic Questions**

- What values do you think define/represent who you are?
- What values do you think define/represent who we are?
- Of those, what 3 values should shape our ministry together?

## Core Values Groups Result

November 17, 2012

### Group 1

- Teaching discipleship with wisdom
- Defining a structure that defines commitment
- Fostering a welcoming spirit within and without

### Group 2

- Faith – practicing God's word and believing in His promises. Seen and unseen
- Family – Giving everyone a sense of belonging
- Commitment – taking active roles in ministry

### Group 3

- Acceptance – bringing people to Christ
- Commitment /Accountability / Obedience
- Love for God exemplified through spiritual growth

<b>Abundance</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Acceptance	Beauty
Accessibility	Being the best
Accomplishment	Belonging
Accountability	Boldness
Accuracy	Bravery
Achievement	Brilliance
Acknowledgement	Calmness
Adaptability	Candor
Advancement	Capability
Affection	Care
Agility	Charity
Appreciation	Comfort
Art	Community
Audacity	Congruency
Availability	Connection

## ***Retreat Evaluation Results Compilation***

*I would like to know how I have done planning this year's first Officers' Round Table event. Please complete the following items and turn in the end of today's session.*

I attended this retreat because:

I want to learn & grow in my ministry to be better prepared.  
I was asked.  
I am a leader in the church and wanted to fellowship and learn with the other leaders.  
I just felt the need to learn more about our needs.  
I felt that getting away from the hustle and bustle; we can concentrate on visions for our church.  
I needed to be in sync with other leaders of ministry.  
I was invited to participate as a board member.  
Of my responsibilities to the church...

The most important thing I learned and/or did was:

My service affects others service.  
Spoke when I could have been quiet – did not take things personally. Something about geese...  
Geese never leave another behind.  
...to discerning God's will  
A small glimpse in ministry challenges. Letting go of my past ministry failures.  
...able to get acquainted with other leaders.  
exchanging of ideas.

What I liked most about today's presentation was:

The sharing of food.  
The continuity of the presentation. Its flow. I liked the time to worship first.  
Time to listen to each other. Voice concerns. Share/fellowship  
Honest communication  
Everyone not being afraid to speak their minds.  
We were all open to each other's thoughts and suggestions.  
The on screen presentations were easy to follow. There were ample question and answer opportunities together with suggestions for overall improvements.  
Power Point

At the next retreat I would like to hear about:

How to make a handbook /by-laws / form leadership (business) committee within the ministry.  
Changes people may have decided to make in their 'servant life' after the retreat.  
Different ideas that address concrete weaknesses; different ideas that accentuate our strengths.  
Practical steps, more vision statements.  
All the things we discussed today.  
More open discussion where we offer suggestions to moving our church forward.  
Strategies to make members and visitors aware of GBC mission & vision statements.  
How to put in place all the ideas discussed.

An area which could be improved in the future is:

Maybe having a time keeper in discussion groups / facilitator.  
More time for the small group discussion.  
I think should be spent articulating a vision/mission/goals that participants can speak / reflect / address.  
Starting on time.  
Commitment.  
This session was well organized and informative. I would like to see this event more frequently.  
Starting on time.

I felt the retreat was	Excellent (3)	Very Good (5)	Above Avg.	Average	Needs Improvement
The accommodations were	Excellent (4)	Very Good (4)	Above Avg.	Average	Needs Improvement
The food was	Excellent (3)	Very Good (5)	Above Avg.	Average	Needs Improvement
Overall, my experience was	Excellent (3)	Very Good (5)	Above Avg.	Average	Needs Improvement

Thanks for coming and for taking the time to respond.

### **Group 1**

Teaching discipleship with wisdom

Defining a structure that defines commitment

Fostering a welcoming spirit within and without

### **Group 2**

Faith – practicing God’s word and believing in His promises. Seen and unseen

Family – Giving everyone a sense of belonging

Commitment –taking active roles in ministry

### **Group 3**

Acceptance – bringing people to Christ

Commitment /Accountability / Obedience

Love for God exemplified through spiritual growth

#### Spiritual Formation

teaching  
discipleship  
active roles  
spiritual growth  
defining structure  
wisdom

#### Faith & Commitment

obedience  
accountability  
love for God  
practicing God’s word  
believing  
seen and unseen  
bringing others to Christ

#### Care

Welcoming spirit  
belonging  
family  
acceptance

Results from Session 2, November 17, 2012



## Officers' Round Table Core Values Brainstorming

Growing closer together as servant leaders is a journey of discovery and development. Happily, one soon discovers that one does not travel alone but with God and in the company of others. But journeys are never enjoined just for the journey's sake. There's purpose in the journey, a purpose that often does not simply correlate to reaching one's projected or expected

end point. The transformative power of the journey is in the journey itself. For within the crossing, skills are discovered and honed; lessons are learned and spiritual gifts blossom as one matures and develops.

Journeyming together also means we get to traverse some "roads less traveled." That is, we have opportunity to explore some foreign terrain, paths intentionally avoided or which we've never much noticed. This experience will be unfamiliar to us but not to God. Unfamiliar experiences can be a time of heightened anxiety, excitement, stress, elation, irritation, and perhaps fears. Even servant leaders want to maintain a sense of control, consistency, and comfy routine. Be wary of fears. For it's probably this kind of fearful tension of which King David refers in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm:

"Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me."

God is beckoning us. And though the road may seem unfamiliar, dark or even "dangerous" let us not give in to anxieties or fear. Sometimes God leads us into these valleys; sometimes we blithely walk into them unaware. Despite the cause, remember John's declaration (1 John 4:18):

"...perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love (Emphasis added)." (New Living Translation)

"In love there is no room for fear, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear implies punishment and no one who is afraid has come to perfection in love." (New Jerusalem Bible)

Fear has to do with the prospect of going wrong, being hurt (vulnerability?), losing control. We know that – ultimately, and at all times - God is in control. This is true, especially during our leadership journey together.

As part of discerning God's guidance as leaders and a congregation, it's important that each one of us has a clear sense of which values are of most import as we continue in this shared experience. I believe that in uncovering and sharing our a) personal values, b) corporate convergences and interconnections will emerge. Core values that will later serve as paving stones for us to mark, affirm, and follow.



### Person Values Sheet 1

#### Resource Information

To aid you in this process, I've provided a definition of what constitutes values and what values clarification is. In addition, an exhaustive resource sheet is provided for reflection and comparison.

A) Values - Important and lasting [beliefs](#) or ideals shared by the [members](#) of a [culture](#) about what is [good](#) or bad and desirable or undesirable.

B) Values Clarification - a method whereby a person can discover his or her own values by assessing, exploring, and determining what those personal values are and how they affect personal decision making.

Kouzes and Posner, **The Leadership Challenge**

#### Directions

The strategic question below is designed to help you identify and list values important to you.

Question #1: What values do you think define / represent who you are?

What are some of your personal values?	What do believe GBC values?

**Group Members:**

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**Group Values Sheet 2**

**Directions**

The strategic question below is designed to help you identify and list values important to you.

Question #1: What values do you think define / represent who we (GBC) are?

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**What do you think we value?**


Question #2: Of those values above, name three that should shape our ministry together?

---

**What three values should shape our ministry?**

1.	
2.	
3.	

**Choose one (1) person to share your three shared values with the larger group.**

## The Practice of Ministry

Jeremiah 29:13 - And you will seek Me and find *Me*, when you search for Me with all your heart.

How can you discover God's will? How can you be sure of God's guidance in your decisions?" Critical questions of faith like these must be taken seriously and considered thoroughly.

Ken Boa, of Bible.org says, "We shape and order our existence by the hundreds of decisions we make each day, and most of these are so trivial that we make them almost automatically. For many of us, the question of God's will hardly enters into our decisions apart from those unusual times when we realize that a specific choice could affect the rest of our lives."

For GBC, this is a critical time that calls for us all to prayerful discern God's will as we deepen our practice of ministry. Often we think of ministry as the *things* we do. Ministry is not so much doing things, busy work. At its heart, it's serving God: serving God through serving one another; serving God through serving the world. Ministry is not religious stuff we do; it is our way of life, our practice.

Discerning God's will gets us to the heart of knowing God's priorities. Priorities that should direct, color, and define our lives as disciples and a congregation. God created us and redeemed us. Therefore, God owns us. We have a sacred obligation to seek Him with all our heart, mind, and soul and put to practice His way in our lives. That's our top priority. That's how we become truly engaged with others. How can we say we love God whom we've never seen...

Discernment is a "*process rather than a program*", says Ken Boa. "Viewed this way, the emphasis falls on developing an intimate relationship with God and not on following some all-purpose technique." That's really good advice. That is why we worshiped this morning: worship nurtures intimacy with God, intimacy sustains us even as life's demands drain us.

Discernment is coming to knowing God's will. But you can't get to a point of discernment – knowing - if there's no relationship with God. Trying to reach discernment without relationship is tantamount to carnal solicitation, and God cannot be bribed, paid off, or misused.

1) Relationship begins with trusting Jesus. 2) Relationship builds Trust that engenders commitment, fidelity to the one whom you love and devotion to the things God loves. 3) Trust & Commitments undergirds Prayer: It's being honest with God as much as being honest with oneself before the presence of God. And 4), when God speaks, reveals: be obedient. Especially at those times when it's difficult to determine exactly what God's guidance means in full. Obedience is better than sacrifice!

Homily delivered Saturday, October 20, 2012 at ORT Session 1, Church of the Good Shepherd.

GBC  
Spiritual and Relational Vitality  
Questionnaire  
Leadership Version

This questionnaire asks your assessment or opinion concerning the spiritual health and relational well-being of your congregation. Though spiritual and relational vitality are complementary characteristics, separate examination of each helps determine strengths to be celebrated and weaknesses a congregation and its leaders may desire to address.

Section 1 of this survey asks you to give your assessment of the spiritual vitality of your church. Section 2 provides a set of questions designed to help you rate relational well-being; that is, how well people get along; openness, sense of community, etc.

**Section 1 – Spiritual Vitality**

Please take a few moments to assess what you feel is the current level of spiritual health in our congregation.

1. Please rank the importance you feel fellow members place on the following eight spiritual disciplines, using 1 to indicate highest priority and 8 as lowest priority.

Meditation	_____	Service	_____
Prayer	_____	Worship	_____
Fasting	_____	Celebration	_____
Study	_____	Fellowship	_____

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please rank the following spiritual disciplines in order of priority as you practice them, with 1 being your highest priority and 8 the lowest.

Meditation	_____	Service	_____
Prayer	_____	Worship	_____
Fasting	_____	Celebration	_____
Study	_____	Fellowship	_____

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 2 – Relational Vitality

Please indicate what you feel to be the level of spiritual and relational vitality in GBC as indicated below.

3. Please rate the following using a scale of 1 through 5, with 1 indicating highest vitality and 5 indicating lowest vitality.

- a) Worship is experienced as Spirit filled: \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Worship engages the mind and inspires the heart: \_\_\_\_\_
- c) I look forward to seeing others I know at church: \_\_\_\_\_
- d) I usually feel energized after worship \_\_\_\_\_
- e) I come to worship because I am curious to see what will happen next: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Please rate the following by placing an X under the corresponding box for each statement.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Our church's mission is clear to members and visitors.					
Congregational and community life is growing closer.					
Members are growing closer by sharing their lives with increasing regularity.					
People are excited about what's happening at our church.					
I feel emotionally supported and loved.					

5. Using your present level of scriptural knowledge, describe spiritual and relational health in the body of Christ?

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Answer (Matthew 22:35-40)

"All the law and the prophets are summarized by a commandment to love God (spiritual vitality) and to love our neighbor (relational vitality) - like two sides of the same coin."

What is more, Marcia mentioned this in class when noting that Jesus' statement to "render unto Caesar's what is Caesar's; and to God what is God's" is a play on the idea on humanity or the human stamped with God's images as a coin.

"The church described in Acts 2 had a unity of heart, mind, and spirit - and God added daily to their number!" (p. 17)

## Pastoral Evaluation

Dear ministry team member:

Below, please find several questions pertaining to areas of professional growth. You have been asked to participate as you have worked closely with me in some capacity and have had the opportunity to observe me over time. Please complete this and return via email or leave at the church office to maintain your anonymity.

You also have the option of signing or remaining anonymous. Either way, your responses will be held in strict confidence (and will not be published or made public in any way without your prior consent). Your input will enable me to become more aware of strengths and weaknesses in stated areas.

1. General Impression –

a. The pastor's preaching was:

Excellent \_\_\_\_ Very Good \_\_\_\_ Good \_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_ Poor \_\_\_\_

b. Suggestions for improvement in preaching or worship leading:

\_\_\_\_\_

c. Things to continue because they were done well:

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Pastoral Overall Leadership

a. Please indicate your assessment of pastor's overall leadership to the GBC family over the past few months?

Needs improvement \_\_\_\_ Some improvement \_\_\_\_ About the Same \_\_\_\_ Improvement \_\_\_\_

b. Suggestions for improvement:

\_\_\_\_\_

c. Things to continue because they were done well:

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Technological Ability

Please indicate your assessment of pastor's technological skills over the past few months?

No improvement \_\_\_\_ Some Improvement \_\_\_\_ Improvement \_\_\_\_ Insufficient Info \_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Optional)

This document presents evaluation questions to which strategic planning team members responded.

**APPENDIX C**  
**GREENWOOD PRESCHOOL**





## Proposed Greenwood Early Childhood Center Business Plan Summary Sheet

*Mission: Operate a high-quality preschool as way to teach Christ's love to young children in fulfillment of our mission to educate and edify others to the glory of God in service to families.*

### A. Market Demand

- According to the census, population of children under 5 years of age in Park Slope has increased 6% over 10 years.
- Continued boom in school age children is exceeding capacity in public school. Principals are eliminating space for Pre-K programs to provide space for mandated grades
- Goddard, a national day care provider, cites market demand as 3 to 5 children seeking a single nursery school space due to high real estate costs in NYC.
- 2007 report from NYS Office of Family Services finds 40% of Brooklyn's childcare need is unmet.

### B. Neighborhood Competition

- 22 organizations in Park Slope provide preschool services.
- Only one Christian preschool class at St. Savior High School. None are Protestant.
- No stand alone Christian preschool.
- Two Jewish preschools.
- Average tuition for a Sept to June academic year is \$16,240.

**C. Sample Belief Statement.** The Greenwood Early Childhood Center is a preschool for boys and girls of all faiths whose parents seek a program rooted in the moral and theological traditions of the historic Church. Our mission is to create a child-focused environment which aspires to achieve excellence. Our school promotes Christian beliefs and values while respecting the rich and diverse communities within the city in which we live.

**D. Space Available for Preschool.** The church's basement space has 3,800 square feet of usable space with 9' ceiling heights and large windows on two sides. It has a separate entrance onto 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

### E. Preschool operation

- Number of classes: One initial class of 3-year olds (some 4) in the first year. Second class in the second year for 4 year olds. Third class may be added in the future.
- 9am to 3pm day, consistent with others in the neighborhood. An extended day option to 6pm may be offered at additional cost.
- September to June academic year, consistent with other programs.

November 2011

**F. Additional Programming.** After school day at 3pm, space may be used for tutoring for the older children, such as John Jay students. During the summer, a separate summer camp can be accommodated. A summer program can be developed by the preschool Educational Director or space can be leased to outside programs that seek space in Park Slope, such as the arts camp which has approached the church in the past.

**G. Preschool management.** Church to organize a School Board of members interested in education and school administration, and possibly parent representatives. This board will hire the preschool's Education Director/Lead Teacher and oversee mission and operations. Educational Director will be the day- to-day manager of the school.

#### **H. Revenue and Cost Forecast**

Up-front costs: Preliminary estimates to improve 58% of basement space for two classrooms for 2,200 sq ft, estimate is \$282,000. More refined estimates will be developed after engineering inspection for potential lead and asbestos abatement and architectural design.

Annual gross revenue: Assuming first initial class of 18 students, gross revenue is estimated at \$279,000 (14 full tuition students at \$16,250 and 4 subsidized students at \$12,500 for church members and children of teachers)

Annual expenses: \$137,000 estimated (\$75,000 for an educational director/lead teacher and an assistant, and some hourly admin and janitorial service, \$13,000 for benefits, \$50,000 for other expenses (supplies, maintenance, utilities, snacks, insurance, etc))

Annual Net Revenue (revenue to the church after expenses are paid): \$142,000 estimated annually for 1 class or \$7,881 per student. This is consistent with preschool revenue at neighboring Congregation Beth Elohim at \$8,374 per student.

**I. Legal Structure.** Explore correct legal structure, perhaps separate 501c(3) entity.

**J. Licensing Requirements.** The NYC Department of Health Child Care Services licenses and regulates pre-schools. Compliance for: Physical space, program size, teacher/child ratios, educational background of teachers, health, sanitary conditions etc.

**K. Permitting and Construction.** In order to get a City preschool permit, school has to receive permits from the Buildings Dept and be inspected by the Fire Department.

**L. Financing.** The least cost path to finance this project is to use a portion of the church's investment portfolio. A loan from the American Baptist Credit Extension is at 5.75%. For a \$300,000 loan, that is interest payment of \$46,000 for a 5-year loan absent any fees.

**M. Marketing.** Target audience of first class of 18 children - Other Christian families, NY Methodist Hospital employees, John Jay employees, members of GBC recovery ministries and community at large.

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## **Greenwood Baptist Church**

### *Proposal: Development of a GBC Preschool*

#### *Frequently Asked Questions*

1. **Why a preschool? Why develop one? Who thought of it?** *GBC members have been thinking and praying about a school function at the church for a number of years. We have a 4,000 sq feet basement space in a prime commercial location, with its own entrance to 7<sup>th</sup> Ave that has been underused for a long time. A Christian preschool fits within our mission of "leading God's people through maturity in Christ through missions that educate, edify and inspire the glory of God." It would also provide an opportunity for the church to meet a need in the community with so many young children and a way for the church to connect with the local community. The school is also expected to be a steady source of income to help support the increased maintenance needs of our 137-year old building, as well as modernize our facilities, and help more adequately fund our ministries.*
2. **Why not rent space to an existing preschool?** *If we were to rent our space to an existing preschool or the Department of Education to develop its own preschool, the preschool would be secular. We would not be able to fulfill a mission of being able to educate young children about God's presence and grace. We would simply be a landlord.*
3. **Will setting up a preschool affect our not-for-profit as a church?** *No, as long as the school is a ministry of the church. For example, there are many schools affiliated with churches and synagogues that maintain its not-for-profit status.*
4. **What are the other Christian preschools in Park Slope?** *Apart from one class at St. Francis Xavier Elementary School, there are no other Christian preschools in Park Slope. In Brooklyn Heights, there is a Christian preschool at Plymouth Church. In Park Slope, there are two thriving Jewish preschools.*
5. **Who will be in charge of the preschool? The pastor, a specific board?** *We envision a separate non-profit board that will be set up to oversee the Executive Director of the proposed preschool. This board will constitute GBC members that have experience in education and/or are interested in early childhood education.*
6. **Where will the seed money for the school come from?** *It's proposed that the seed money to develop the school come from the church's investment portfolio as well as fundraising efforts.*

7. **What are the estimated costs for renovation of the basement and start-up costs for the school?** *The estimated start up costs for renovating our basement space for two classrooms and playroom are \$285,000. This money is to be recouped from the annual net revenue from the first class of \$142,000, with an additional class or two to be phased in over time.*
8. **Will the preschool be a Christian preschool and share the gospel with children?** *Yes!*
9. **What is the estimated timeframe for the preschool to open?** *We will be prayerful that we can be ready for September 2012. In addition to the space renovation, we will have to go through a licensing process with the Department of Health, as well as pass inspections from the FDNY and the NYC Buildings Department.*
10. **What are the initial steps for this project?** *Attend a Department of Health Child Care Department info session in order to get a project manager assigned to us. Contract with an architect to prepare plans for the space. Retain an attorney to create a non-profit legal entity for the preschool.*
11. **Will any existing boards/committees of Greenwood be involved?** *Members of the Board of Christian Education are likely to be involved to provide expertise. This board should also coordinate with the preschool board on the use of those updated facilities for Sunday School.*
12. **Can the renovated preschool space be used for other purposes?** *In addition to providing added space for Sunday School, we envision that after the preschool day ends at 3pm, we may be able to provide space for tutoring services for John Jay High School students. We can also think of using the space for summer camp sessions (vacation bible school, arts camp, etc). There is demand for that kind of space in the community. This model of activity is currently being done by other houses of worship in Park Slope, such as Old First Reform and Congregation Beth Elohim.*
13. **What are some of the potential risk in such an endeavor for the church community?** *Potential risk may include inadequate enrollment in the early years as the school's reputation builds. But in scaling the school size, we control our costs better as the first class requires salary expenses for 2 teachers for the initial class of 18 children. Other risks may include an accident at the school. In addition to making sure we adhere to up-to-date safety protocols in design, construction and operation, the church will purchase insurance to cover this potential exposure. Regardless though, we will not forget to seek God's grace and blessing for this ministry. He is the BEST insurance policy!*
14. **Will and how can we utilize any outside contacts such as interested stakeholders, affiliations, local politicians?** *Yes, we look forward to help from all parties. We should reach out to interested stakeholders such as Methodist Hospital to help market the school. Local officials can help us raise our local profile in marketing as well. All ideas and offers of help are welcome.*



15. **The proposed Sept. 2012 timeframe for opening the GBC preschool seems very aggressive, why the sense of urgency?** *Parents typically make preschool plans on an academic calendar basis. If we are not ready by September 2012, we may not be able to fill our first class if we miss that date. If we wait until Sept 2013, we will miss the opportunity to capture the revenue generated from the preschool, estimated at annual revenue of \$142,000 after expenses are paid for one class. This revenue projection was prepared looking at costs and tuition and is also verified by the costs and revenues from a similar preschool in the neighborhood. Absent this additional revenue, the church will need to continue to spend down its investment reserves to maintain the building, such as the roof expenses. Current offerings just cover the church normal operating expenses. It does not cover maintenance or improvements. We have been using the investment portfolio for funds to cover needed maintenance and repair of 137-year church building and 100+ year old parsonage. Absent a new large gift to the church, we will have problems keeping our building intact after the investment portfolio is spent down.*
16. **Will the preschool only be open to Park Slope families?** *The preschool is not open only to Park Slope families. The church may adopt a policy of preferred admission for the children of GBC members. It is also likely that the employees who work at Methodist and John Jay and other area businesses, who live elsewhere, will find a GBC preschool a convenient location for their children.*
17. **Will there be a selection, lottery or open enrollment type process?** *The board for the preschool can have the Executive Director that it will hire evaluate the pros and cons of different types of enrollment processes and make a recommendation to the GBC's Preschool Board. The board can then decide what process fits best into the church's mission and goals.*
18. **What happens if the church membership votes not to move forward? Are there any alternatives?** *If the church body elects not to proceed with the development of a preschool, we will continue to seek God's guidance to evaluate how we can use our available space to serve His purposes. An alternative may be to use the space for other educational using the space as an after-school tutoring venue. However, this use alone will not generate as much revenue as a more actively-used preschool.*
19. **How can I help?** *There are many ways to help!*
- a. *Pray that God will order our steps and open doors for us for missions that will glorify Him.*
  - b. *Volunteer your talents – administrative, writing, e-knowledge, website, advertising, branding, educational knowledge, building, networking!*
  - c. *Raise money. Your special tax-deductible donation will be especially appreciated. You can also tell your friends and family about the project and encourage their interest and help. If you have fundraising expertise, we would love your help and suggestions.*

- d. *Scope out talented Christian early childhood educators. We want the teachers of this school to be the best examples of Christ, as living testimony to the children and their families. If you know of people like this, we want to know about them!*
- e. *Inform other families of our Christian preschool option. If you know of families with young children, you can tell them about our plans and we can put them on an information email list to keep them informed of our progress.*
- f. *Building process. If you have a building skill and would like to donate your expertise the project, let us know! If you know people or have contacts in the building industry or departments, let us know as well. We are sure to have issues in which we need advice to jump through hurdles.*



GBC  
Early Childhood Education Ministry  
Educational Development Team  
September 25, 2012 – 7 p.m.

#### Agenda

Pastor E.H. Jones, Convening

Development Team Update:

- Feasibility Study UrbanX Studio

Complete: September 29, 2012

Educational Team Objectives:

- Resume: Identify 6 Tenets of Preschool Philosophy
- Educational Director/Consultant Process
- Draft Educational Team's Activity Timeline

Next Meeting:

Tentative: Tuesday, October 9, 2012 @ 7 p.m.

461 Sixth Street  
Brooklyn, New York 11215  
greenwoodbaptist@verizon.net  
718-768-2488  
718-768-3630

## Education Team Project Items

September 13, 2012

- Develop School Philosophy
- Educational Ministry Team
- Educational Director
  - Reports to Educational Ministry Team (GBC)
  - Set & Implement Curriculum
  - Classroom Practice
  - Professional Development
  - Interfaces with community re: GP and educational mission
  - Implements GP pedagogy (TBD)
  - Committed to Christian faith-based educational program
  - Committed to social-emotional learning
  - Committed to play-based curriculum
  - Oversees design and implementation of classroom curriculum
  - Coordinates communication with parents regarding childrens' experiences in school (e.g. parent/teacher conferences, newsletters, student observations summaries, etc.)
  - Oversees support for children with special needs including
  - Supervises teachers and support staff
  - Provides kindergarten and exit guidance to families
  - Ensures regulatory compliance with NYC DMH Article 47
- Shared Responsibilities (To be clarified for GP)
  - Ensure GO mission and vision is implemented
  - Build relationships with community
  - Coordinate classroom staffing and use of substitutes
  - Schedule and host admissions tours and participate in recruiting activities
  - Finalize admissions decisions and classroom composition
  - Plan and coordinate all-school events
  - Update and maintain website
  - Recruit and manage staff
  - Design and manage enrichment programs
- Thanks to K. Velez who shared PSCCC's outline of educational director and executive director responsibilities. Thanks to PSCCC for making this material available.



Dear Educational Development Team members:

Several years back I shared my philosophy of Christian Education with the board of Christian Education. This sharing took place under Ms. Marie Lewis' administration of the board and educational ministry. I was happy to do so because I knew the educational philosophy of any church is an extension of Pastoral ministry and the Pastor's theology, in particular.

Our Christian education ministry, though still growing and slowly improving, has been fraught with programmatic, volunteer, and implementation challenges that have proved quite frustrating at times. However, these challenges have taught us to be more creative and flexible when it comes to thinking about what we do, critically analyzing our demographics, and aligning our resources to effectively implement our program.

Despite the difficulties, God has blessed us with a new and greater opportunity to minister to children here in Brooklyn. As the result of a long but blessed discernment process in 2011, the GBC body voted to pursue the development of a preschool ministry. This decision, serendipitously, realigned GBC with its original mission emphasis from 1858 – to bring education to the children of Park Slope, Brooklyn. A preschool development team (PDT) was organized last winter and has diligently worked to bring the physical aspects of the preschool to fruition. Eight months later, the educational development team's (EDT) work is now commencing. These teams, PDT and EDT, will occasionally work as an integrated unit and at other times in tandem. Their point of departure is dictated by purpose. The EDT focus is, in fact, farther ranging in scope than the PDT in that the EDT will encompass organizational, administrative, pedagogical, and ultimately, financial management of the preschool ministry. The role of the PDT is to oversee the development, financing, and construction of the preschool then pass on management to the EDT.

As I shared my philosophy of Christian Education with the Board of Christian Education early on in my tenure as pastor, I now share the core principles of my philosophy with the EDT, which will function as a service of the board of Christian Education; and, by extension, a ministry of the Greenwood Baptist Church. I trust my statement of philosophy will generate thought and discussion amongst the team as it wrestles with (in collaboration with me) a simple yet elegant statement of philosophy for the preschool that will guide and drive its educational ministry.

#### **A Philosophy of Christian Education**

*"The purpose and goal of Christian education is the restoration of the image of God in each student (Philosophy & Education, p. 186)."*

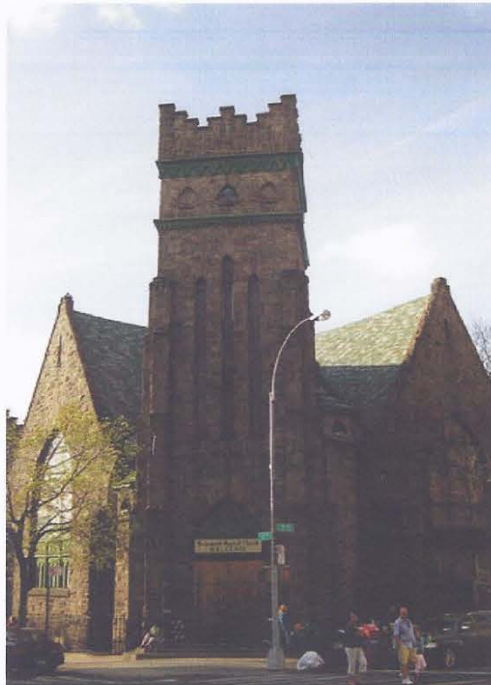
"The Bible teaches that humanity is fallen and sinful and in need of restoration. For millennia, people of all of ages, cultures, and walks of life have received restoration and reconciliation to God through His son, Jesus Christ. This restoration and reconciliation, what the

**GREENWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH:  
PRESCHOOL STUDY**

**461 6<sup>th</sup> STREET  
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11215**

**CONCEPT DESIGN SCOPE OF WORK OUTLINE**

October 1, 2012



Architecture | Planning | Sustainability Consulting

61 Eastern Parkway, Suite 1A Brooklyn, New York 11238  
P. 718-857-4657 / E. [ics@urbanxstudio.com](mailto:ics@urbanxstudio.com)

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- INTRODUCTION
- PROPERTY / ARCHITECTURAL BUILDING SURVEY
- EXISTING BUILDING PHOTOGRAPHS
- CODE REVIEW / DOB FILING REPORT
- SCOPE OF WORK OUTLINE
- SCHEDULE OF FINISHES
- LIGHT FIXTURE SCHEDULE OF STANDARDS
- ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS
- MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING & FIRE PROTECTION BASIS OF DESIGN
- MECHANICAL & FIRE PROTECTION DRAWINGS
- STRUCTURAL SCOPE OF WORK DRAWINGS
- ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING REPORTS – LEAD & ASBESTOS REPORTS

**DRAWING LIST**ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS

D-100.00	CELLAR DEMOLITION PLAN
D-110.00	FIRST FLOOR DEMOLITION PLAN
<i>D-110.00</i>	<i>FIRST FLOOR DEMOLITION PLAN – (ALTERNATE)</i>
D-120.00	SECOND FLOOR DEMOLITION PLAN
<i>D-120.00</i>	<i>SECOND FLOOR DEMOLITION PLAN – (ALTERNATE)</i>
D-130.00	ROOF DEMOLITION PLAN
A-100.00	CELLAR FLOOR PLAN
A-110.00	FIRST FLOOR PLAN
<i>A-110.00</i>	<i>FIRST FLOOR PLAN – (ALTERNATE)</i>
A-120.00	SECOND FLOOR PLAN
<i>A-120.00</i>	<i>SECOND FLOOR PLAN – (ALTERNATE)</i>
A-130.00	ROOF PLAN

M/E/P/FP DRAWINGS

SK-PFP-100	CELLAR FLOOR PLAN – PLUMBING / FIRE PROTECTION
SK-PFP-110	FIRST FLOOR PLAN – PLUMBING / FIRE PROTECTION
SK-M-100	CELLAR FLOOR PLAN – MECHANICAL
SK-M-110	FIRST FLOOR PLAN – MECHANICAL
SK-M-120	SECOND FLOOR PLAN – MECHANICAL
SK-M-130	ROOF PLAN – MECHANICAL

STRUCTURAL DRAWINGS

SK-S-100	CELLAR FLOOR PLAN – STRUCTURAL
SK-S-110	FIRST FLOOR PLAN – STRUCTURAL
SK-S-120	SECOND FLOOR PLAN – STRUCTURAL
SK-S-D-120	SECOND FLOOR DUNNAGE PLAN - STRUCTURAL
SK-S-130	ROOF PLAN – STRUCTURAL
SK-S-D-130	ROOF DUNNAGE PLAN - STRUCTURAL

END OF SECTION

October 1, 2012



**INTRODUCTION**

Urban X Studio Architecture, PLLC was engaged by The Greenwood Baptist Church for programming and concept design / feasibility study services related to their desire to develop a new preschool facility, approximately 4,200 square feet, within the confines of the first and basement floor levels of their existing 28,000 sf (est.) church, located on the corner of Sixth Street and Seventh Avenue, and built in 1900.

The Greenwood Baptist Church began as a mission school, established in the fall of 1855 by the Rev. Henry Brownley, a missionary appointed by the Tabernacle Baptist Church. Over the next decades, the society grew and prospered, and on in 1900, the present church was built at the corner of Sixth Street and Seventh Avenue. Designed in the Gothic style, the church is built of stone and has two gabled fronts with large windows that face the streets. In 1914, the church was expanded to include a stone tower that contains the main entrance in its base. Built at an angle to the building and facing the corner, the unusual tower has sides containing three tall lancet openings, above which are three round windows, two bands of terra cotta tiles, and a stepped design at the very top.

The Greenwood Baptist Church Preschool is planned as a private not-for-profit preschool / daycare facility serving the local community. The preschool plans to accommodate a select number of classrooms for children between the ages of 2-5, with the required support spaces. The programmatic components of the preschool will include preschool classrooms, childrens' bathrooms, staff bathroom, administrative offices, indoor playroom and storage spaces. Additional improvements, such as the expansion and relocation of existing church bathrooms and church administrative offices are necessary as a result of the planned project.

The church resides in the R6A/R6B [C1-4 commercial overlay] zoning district, which permits community facility uses such as a school. Educational occupancy group (G) is permitted in a sprinklered combustible building construction group Class II-C (1968 Code equivalent to 1938 Code Class 3 non-fireproof) up to a square footage of 12,600 sf. Combustible construction class II-C include buildings and spaces in which the exterior walls, fire walls, exitways and shaft enclosures are of noncombustible materials having the required fire-resistance ratings; and in which the floors, roofs and interior framing are wholly or partly of wood or other materials having no fire-resistance ratings. The existing building does not have a Certificate of Occupancy and the Preschool would require establishing existing use of the building and filing for a change of use/occupancy group on the first and basement floors. Therefore, an Alteration Type 1 application must be submitted to the Department of Buildings and a Certificate of Occupancy obtained for this use/occupancy.

Greenwood Baptist Church plans to file a Local Law 58/87 Accessibility Waiver Request (with the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities) based on economic and physical hardship. Local Law 58/87 requires barrier-free access from the sidewalk through the primary preschool entrance to the cellar floor level, where the proposed preschool classrooms and bathroom facilities are proposed.



6th Street - Exit from Cellar Level



Entry to Church offices at 6th Street - First Floor





To 6th Street



To 7th Avenue











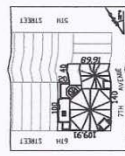
**URBAN X STUDIO**  
Architecture, PLLC

60 Main Parkway Suite 1A  
New York, NY 10013  
Tel: 212.512.1000  
www.urbanxstudio.com

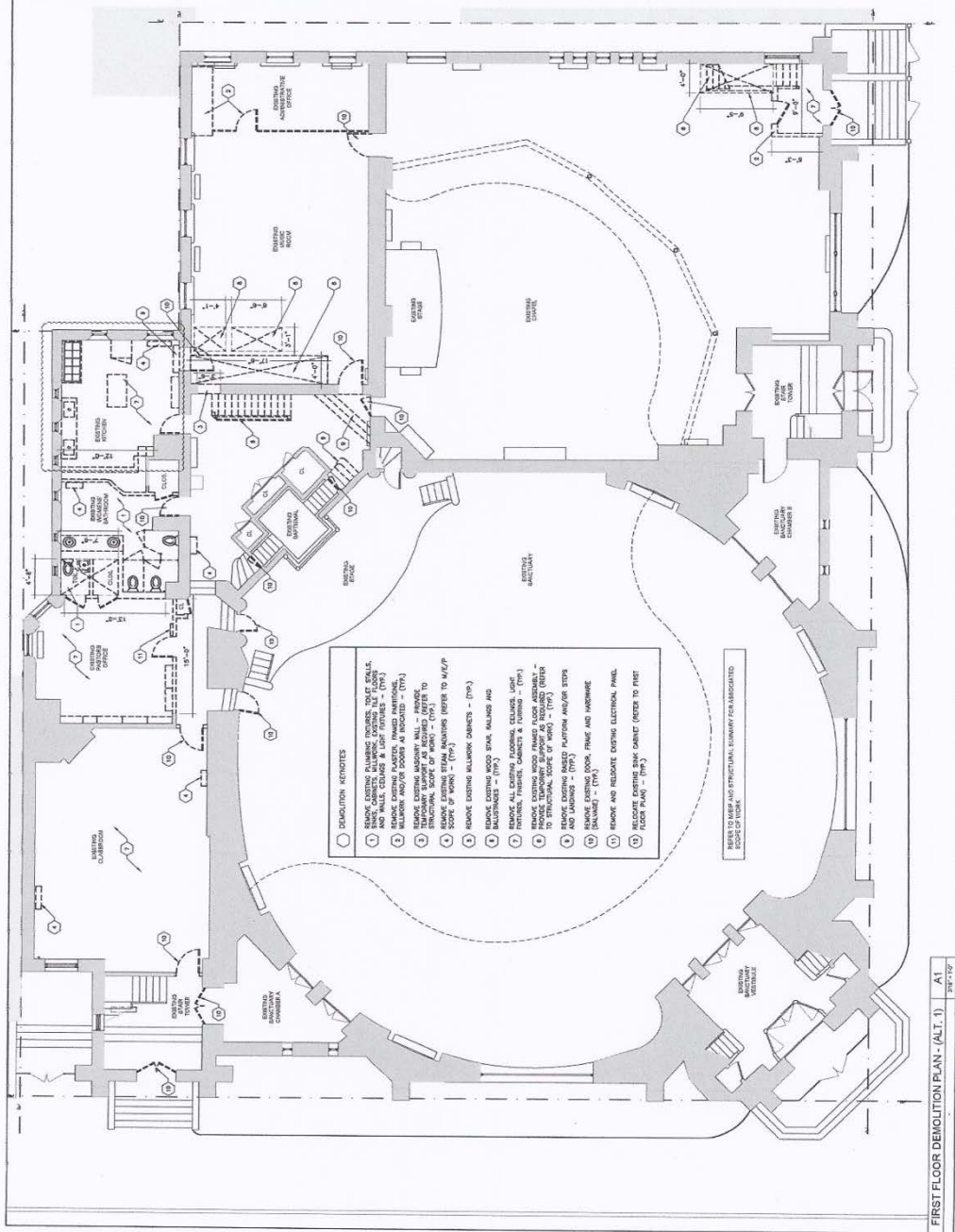
ANF Engineers, LLP  
MEP Engineers  
100 West 10th Street, 4th flr  
New York, New York 10011  
Tel: 212.512.1000  
www.anfengineers.com

Design 2147 Limited  
Structural & Energy Consulting  
100 West 10th Street, 4th flr  
New York, New York 10011  
Tel: 212.512.1000  
www.design2147.com

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION



Project:	Greenwood Baptist Church Preschool
Location:	461 6th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11215
Client:	Greenwood Baptist Church
Architect:	Urban X Studio
Engineer:	ANF Engineers, LLP
Structural Engineer:	Design 2147 Limited
MEP Engineer:	ANF Engineers, LLP
Energy Engineer:	Design 2147 Limited
Sheet Title:	FIRST FLOOR DEMOLITION PLAN - (ALTERNATE #1)
Sheet Number:	D-110.00
Scale:	1/8" = 1'-0"
Date:	10/21/19
Drawn By:	ANF
Checked By:	ANF
Approved By:	ANF
Project Number:	15004
Revision:	1
Revision Description:	Revised to meet and structural summary for associated scope of work.



FIRST FLOOR DEMOLITION PLAN - (ALT. 1) A1  
1/8" = 1'-0"

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1. PURPOSE
2. INTRODUCTION
3. HEATING, VENTILATION AND AIR CONDITIONING
4. ELECTRICAL
5. PLUMBING
6. FIRE PROTECTION
7. ALTERNATE 1: NEW CATERING KITCHEN

1. PURPOSE:

This document outlines the mechanical, electrical, plumbing, fire protection and controls criteria upon which the design of the systems will be based.

The information is presented for review and approval of the Owner, as well as the Architect and other members of the project team.

The Basis of Design is a dynamic document that will be adjusted to reflect the requirements due to revisions in the program, scope or Owner requirements.

## 2. INTRODUCTION:

The project consists of the interior renovations and upgrades to the Greenwood Baptist Church located at 461 6<sup>th</sup> Street in Brooklyn to create a Pre-School in the cellar level of the building.

The systems will be designed in accordance with the applicable codes, authorities having jurisdiction, and in accordance with current good engineering practices.

The following is a listing of codes, regulations, standards and approvals that will be used in the design of this project:

- 1) Building Code of the City of New York, 2008 Edition. (BCNYC)
- 2) New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code.
- 3) New York City Electric Code, 2007 Edition.
- 4) OSHA Safety and Health Standards.
- 5) National Fire Protection Association Standards (NFPA).
- 6) American National Standards Institute (ANSI).
- 7) American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE).
- 8) National Electrical Manufacturer's Association (NEMA).
- 9) Sheetmetal and Air Conditioning Contractors National Association, Inc. (SMACNA).
- 10) Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. (UL).
- 11) Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute (ARI).
- 12) Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE).
- 13) American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME).

Greenwood Baptist Church  
461 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Brooklyn, NY

- 14) American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM).
- 15) American National Standards Institute (ANSI).
- 16) National Electrical Code (NEC)
- 17) ANSI/TIA/EIA-569-B Commercial Building Standard for  
Telecommunications Pathways and Spaces



# **GREENWOOD PRESCHOOL BUSINESS PLAN SUMMARY**

**Presentation to ABEC  
February 28, 2013**

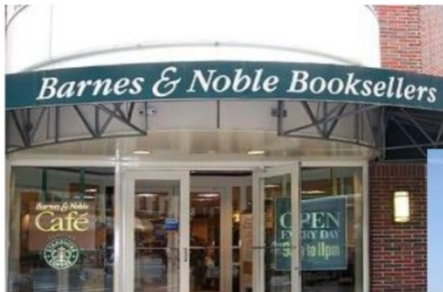


## GREENWOOD HISTORY

- Started as a prayer meeting in 1856.
- Church grew and moved to its third location where they constructed a new church building at 461 6<sup>th</sup> Street, which was dedicated for service in 1901.
- Sanctuary seats 1,100 people.
- Today, neighborhood is of mixed faiths.
- Primary school is highly sought
  - One of the best in NYC
  - High population of families with young children
  - “Stroller capital” of Brooklyn



## PARK SLOPE TODAY



## ADJOINING LAND USES BY CHURCH



## MARKET DEMAND

- Population under 5 in Park Slope has increased 35% since 2000, according to Census.
- Continued boom in school-age children is exceeding capacity in public school.
  - Principals are eliminating space for Pre-K programs to provide space for mandated grades.
- High demand in NYC for preschool spots
  - High real estate costs has deterred development of new preschools, according to Goddard, a national day care provider, 3 to 5 children seek admission for each spot.
  - 2013 admissions process at Park Slope Childcare Collective – 140 applications for 7 spots



## NEIGHBORHOOD COMPETITION

- 24 organizations in Park Slope provide preschool services.
- Only one Christian preschool class at St. Savior High School. None are Protestant.
- Two Jewish preschools.
- ***No stand-alone Christian preschool.***
- Average annual tuition for a Sept to June academic year is over \$16,240 (2011)

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## BELIEF STATEMENT

- The Greenwood Preschool is a preschool for boys and girls whose parents seek a program rooted in the moral and theological traditions of the historic Church.
- Our mission is to create a child-focused environment which aspires to excellence.
- Our school promotes Christian beliefs and values while respecting the rich and diverse communities within our city.

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## EXISTING SPACE AVAILABLE FOR PRESCHOOL

- Existing church's basement space
  - 5,000 square feet of finished usable space
  - Currently underused – primarily used for 1 Sunday school classroom and storage
  - 9' ceiling heights and large windows on two sides.
  - Existing bathroom and plumbing on same level
  - Separate entrance onto 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, a major commercial street.
- Requires renovation to meeting local building and licensing codes for preschool use

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## PRESCHOOL OPERATION

- Three classrooms for school of 50 children
- Weekly chapel service
- Enrichment classes
- Potentially 9 am to 3 pm day, consistent with others in the neighborhood, with extended day option to 6 pm.
- Opportunity to use space during non-preschool hours for tutoring and for consolidated Sunday School classrooms.

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## PRESCHOOL MANAGEMENT

- Church to organize a School Board of members interested in education and school administration.
- Board will hire the preschool's Education Director/Lead Teacher and oversee mission and operations.
- Educational Director will be the day-to-day manager of the school.

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## CHURCH COMMISSIONED PRESCHOOL FEASIBILITY STUDY WITH ARCHITECT

- In 2012, Church body unanimously approved proceeding with feasibility study to evaluate opening a preschool as a ministry
- Preschool committee evaluated four architects and interviewed two. Prerequisite was preschool experience.
- Selected Urban X Studios for year-long study
  - Elissa Ieso designed local preschool Park Slope School House
  - Experience with new NYC Dept of Health rules
  - Board member of Park Slope School House .
  - Extensive experience with school projects
  - Brings big firm perspective and organization. Was formerly of Platt Byard Dovell White and worked on major school projects
  - Local, lives in Park Slope
  - Experience working with boards
  - Just starting her own practice, wants to succeed. Has been very responsive to Greenwood information requests.

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## PARK SLOPE SCHOOLHOUSE



- Designed by Elissa Icsó
- Preschool formed by Methodist Hospital in 1986
- Originally on 6<sup>th</sup> Street, now on 5<sup>th</sup> Ave in Park Slope
- Now independently operated

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## PARK SLOPE SCHOOLHOUSE



13

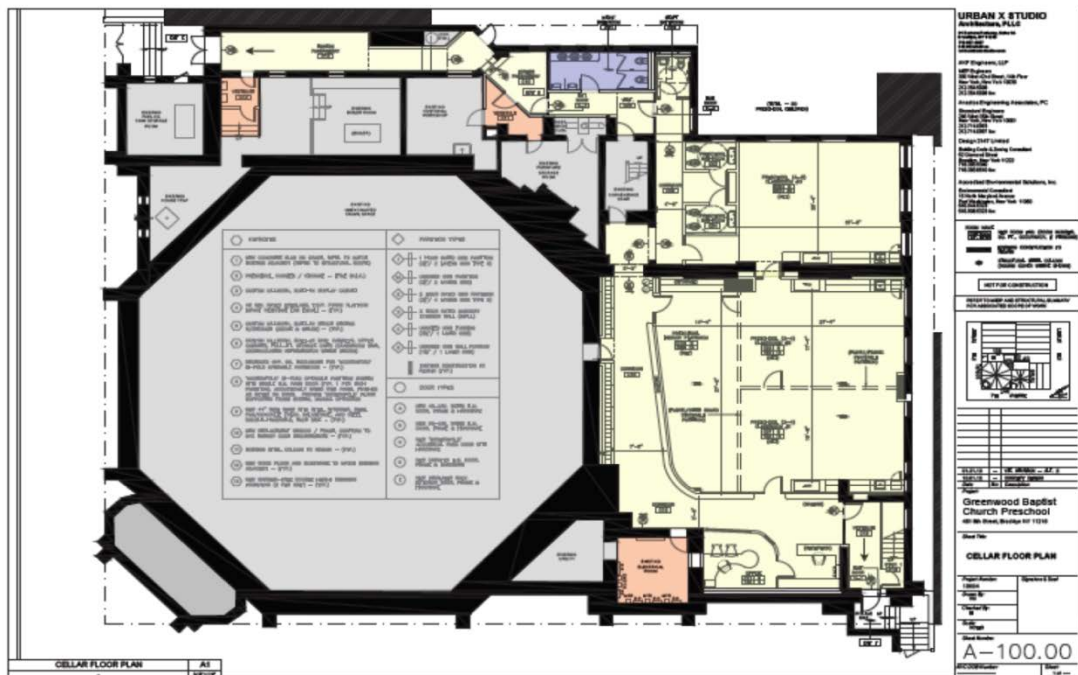
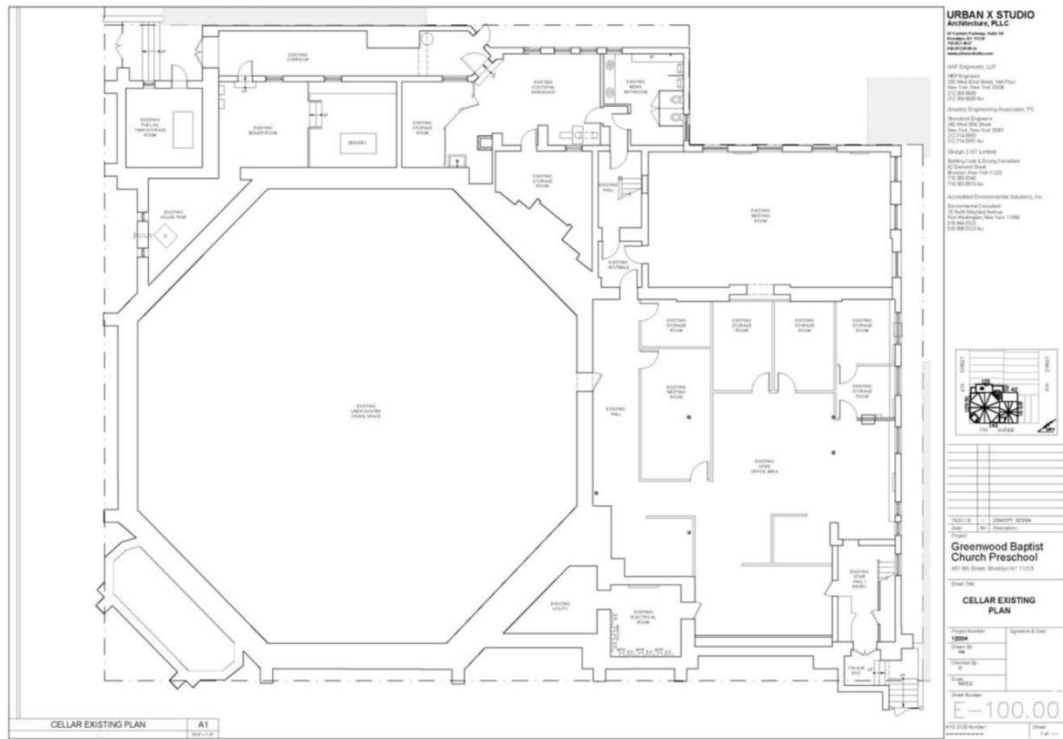


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## COMPONENTS OF FEASIBILITY STUDY

- ✓ Site Survey
- ✓ Interior architectural base map
- ✓ Code review and established permit filing strategy
- ✓ Engineering report
- ✓ Preliminary architectural design of facility
- ✓ Mechanical, electrical, plumbing and fire protection plan
- ✓ Environmental testing for lead and asbestos
- ✓ Design underwent cost estimation from two construction companies.
- ✓ Value engineering process to fit design into budget
- ✓ Re-evaluated by construction company to prepare planning cost estimate.

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Operable partition system is planned to enable space to be used flexibly by church during non-school hours.



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## REVENUE AND EXPENSE FORECAST

- Up-front costs: Preliminary estimates to improve space for three classrooms of 5,485 sq ft estimate is \$1,105,495.
- Annual gross revenue: \$850,000
  - 50 students x annual tuition of \$17K
- Annual preschool expenses: \$498,200.
  - Salary, training, and operating costs
- Annual cost of loan (ten-year loan of 5.5%) \$143,255
- Annual Net Revenue: \$208,545
  - After loan is repaid, net revenue per student is \$7,036. Not far from comparable synagogue neighborhood preschool of \$8,374.

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Income				
Tuition				
	Tuition - Full	50	\$ 17,000	\$ 850,000
	Tuition - Subsidized	0	\$ 12,000	\$ -
	<b>Total Income</b>			<b>\$ 850,000</b>
Expenses				
Salary, Benefits & Training				
	Educational Director Salary	1	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000
	Educational Director Benefits	1	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000
	Full-time Teachers - Salary	3	\$ 40,000	\$ 120,000
	Full-time Teachers - Benefits	3	\$ 12,000	\$ 36,000
	Part-time Teachers - Salary	6	\$ 18,000	\$ 108,000
	Part-time Administrative Assistant	1	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000
	Part-time Janitor	1	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
	Substitutes & Enrichment Partners	1	\$ 24,000	\$ 24,000
	Staff Training	1	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
	<b>Total Salary, Benefits &amp; Training Expenses</b>			<b>\$ 403,000</b>

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Operating Costs				
	Marketing	1	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
	School Supplies	12	\$ 1,500	\$ 18,000
	Food Purchases	12	\$ 1,500	\$ 18,000
	Utilities (Oil, Electric & Water)	12	\$ 1,500	\$ 18,000
	Phone & Internet	12	\$ 100	\$ 1,200
	Property & Liability Insurance	1	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
	Maintenance & Repairs	1	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
	<b>Total Operating Costs</b>			<b>\$ 95,200</b>
Loan Repayment				
	Loan Repayment - Principal & Interest	12	\$ 11,938	\$ 143,255
	Total Loan Costs			\$ 143,255
	<b>Total Expenses</b>			<b>\$ 641,455</b>
	<b>Total Annual Profit/(Loss)</b>			<b>\$ 208,545</b>

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## LEGAL STRUCTURE

- Incorporate into Church's existing operations and 501c3 status
- Similar to operations of other religious preschools in NYC
- Want to keep it religious in mission

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## LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

- NYC Department of Health Child Care Services
  - Licenses and regulates pre-schools regarding compliance for:
    - Physical space
    - Program size,
    - Teacher/child ratios,
    - Educational background of teachers,
    - Health, sanitary conditions etc.

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## MARKETING

- ☑ Logo established
- ☑ Preschool Educational committee: Members willing to serve!
- ☑ Website domain: [www.greenwoodpreschool.org](http://www.greenwoodpreschool.org)
- Target audience of first class of children
  - Other Christian families, including those at Park Slope Presbyterian Church
  - NY Methodist Hospital employees
  - John Jay High School employees
  - Members of GBC recovery ministries and
  - Community at large.
- Current and continuing evidence of high demand
  - At local preschool, reports of applications of 140 for 7 preschool spots, most of went to siblings of current students.

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## REQUEST: ABEC LOAN

- Loan of \$1,190,000 for preschool
- Secured collateral of Greenwood parsonage at 461 13<sup>th</sup> Street
  - Prime real estate next to Prospect Park in highly coveted historic district
  - 2-family home with monthly rental income of \$2,300.
  - City assessed market value of \$1,642,000
  - Current market value likely higher. Estimated by our broker at \$2,300,000
  - *Church has NO loans or liens on either parsonage or church building.*



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[www.greenwoodpreschool.org](http://www.greenwoodpreschool.org)

Opening: Sept 2014/Jan 2015

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Itemized construction estimate
- Projected operating budget
- Three-year cash flow model and assumptions
- Table of neighborhood preschools for comparison
- Greenwood Preschool Building Committee biographies

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**APPENDIX D**  
**SIX CORE MESSAGES**

## Colony Collapse Disorder & Countering Times of Change

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

"David Bradshaw has endured countless stings during his life as a beekeeper, but he got the shock of his career when he opened his boxes last month and found half of his 100 million bees missing." So begins a story in *The New York Times*. Bradshaw, 50, is missing his bees. He says he has never seen anything like it. "Box after box after box is just empty. There's nobody home."

Across America, honeybees are disappearing without a trace. And it's a cause for huge concern for bees contribute more than 14 billion to the agricultural industry. Here's where we're going with this: Change. Imagine David Bradshaw, the beekeeper, is now Rev. David Bradshaw, pastor: "Rev. Bradshaw got the shock of his ministry when he looked at his church last year and found half of his members were missing." You see where this is going. The disappearance of the bees is related to a phenomenon called Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD), in which beehives suddenly die off; and if you think of a church, or *the* church, as a colony or congregation... It's fair to ask the question what's happening?

Churches across America are disappearing. While there is no single reason that explains it, some cases may be related to a kind of Colony Collapse Disorder – factors such as economic contraction; changing demographics; ministry irrelevancy, not to mention Rev. 1:9-20...

Consider the picture of the early church in the text. Luke reports on Peter's sermon... The crowd cried out, "What should we do?" That is, what do YOU have to offer? Peter responded: be baptized, receive forgiveness, and the gift of Holy Spirit !

**1. These are the "entry level" things.** For believers to be the church of J.C., it must mediate these things! Note, I did not say do those things...

- a) We offer Christ, we call people to repentance, we practice forgiveness, we experience H.S. -
- b) Repentance leads to transformation: If we do not, then we are not the church...

If we continue reading to the end of the chapter, we find Luke's account of significant developments among those early converts that go beyond the entry-level things to developments that strengthened the church.

**2. These are the developmental things...**

A few Sundays ago I preached on Creative Ingenuity – putting to use that which God has given. Matt. 25:14...

- a) Here, they pooled their resources – Which invested God's blessings
- b) They cared for one another > spent time in worship > learning > fellowship > prayer with generous hearts > and eating together!
- c) Because of this synergy they generated a kind of capital – "the goodwill of all the people," even those who had not embraced Christ saw the congregation as a community gem.

So, it would seem that if we wanted to point to a church today that *should not* collapse, it would be one where people are clearly and creatively called to Christ; where worship is strong; fellowship & caring are vibrant; and everyone knows and embraces the same goals in mission and ministry, developments that insure thorough Christian education for children and newcomers to the faith; which engenders high regard by the larger community.

**3. Being a follower of Jesus is *both* a group trip *and* an individual experience.**

The writer of Hebrews told the Christians of his day to not neglect to meet together, but to assemble as believers to encourage one another (Hebrews 10:25)...

- a) The Journey can dull morale – Travel in groups, small groups.
- b) Determine to do the things that make for healthy faith...

Adapted from "Colony Collapse Disorder," [www.HomeliticsOnline.com](http://www.HomeliticsOnline.com).

The beatitudes (blessings); a radical re-ordering of social structuring... Most people thought those who had the best in life were the blessed of God... Here, Jesus spoke to true blessedness... What they thought of as limitation, deficit, and disadvantage, is God's means of entry into their lives.

Those identified, the blessed, are the agents of God's grace to others... The abundance of God's blessing flows to them & then to others!

Our text connects the beatitudes with the Similitudes, images of what disciples are like: "Students at American University in Washington D.C. give an example of salt. They learned Westboro Baptist Church planned to picket their University, they picket soldiers funerals... The United Methodist Campus Ministry at A.U. heard about the planned protest and organized the student population. The natural response is counter-protest; meet hatred with hatred; fight fire with fire. Instead when members of Westboro arrived, they were met by a crowd more than 1,000 students, offering hugs, cups of hot chocolate... The students rallied the night before with a prayer service, and organized a poetry reading that turned Westboro's hateful messages into words of love. The students at A.U. were salt!"

"Salt's importance is often overlooked. In antiquity, roads and town grew around salt deposits which drove commerce and trade. Roman soldiers were paid in salt, their salary, because it was such a precious mineral. The ancient slave trade use salt as legal tender; and it's from that trade we get, "he's worth his weight in salt." So when Jesus said, "you are the salt of the earth," the disciples didn't take him lightly... Salt's an enhancer & preserver; that's why we love it! It begins a change that brings benefits and value!

1) **Disciples Bring Out the Best** – "You are the salt..."

True, Jesus was speaking to those few first disciples; what a change in mindset?!

These words reverberate to us: Your purpose is to enhance the earth!

a) This is not superficial or cosmetic – the gospel penetrates life!

b) "We don't have salt; we are salt (Sauer)." What we are changes the nature of that we touch!

2) **Avoid Salt-Substitutes** – "but if the salt loses its flavor..."

This is a small and significant shift in Jesus thought: What happens if salt is not salt? What happens when we don't live up to our purpose? We lose saltiness! Lose blessedness...

a) Salt Substitutes seep in -

b) Implications are far ranging – i) the world needs what we have! Salt preserves (caustic).

3) **Salt is Change** – "How shall it be seasoned?"

The Sermon on the Mount is Significant for what Jesus said and what it means. It is the foundational plank of the KOG and change it brings it brings to everyone, salt and earth!

1) Salt changes – "A wonderful change has come over me..."

2 Our presence should enhance and preserve what is good about life!

### Creative Ingenuity

Images describing the spiritual journey take on many depictions. Quite often, a spiritual journey is characterized as a road. This characterization is apt for it gives one the vantage point of identifying a beginning, crucial turning points, valleys and highpoints over the course of one's life. It's quite beneficial to look back and to see just how far God has brought you... As the metaphor of a road is fitting for the spiritual journey, there are images that symbolize discipleship: the image of fruit; sheep following a shepherd; Paul's image of the Body of Christ. There's another less obvious but important image to consider – discipleship as a lake & D as a river. Lakes are marvelous wonders. Some are wide others long. Their stateliness provides a sense of serenity and peace. Yet for all their natural beauty, a lake is still little more than a reservoir, holding that which has been deposited. Rivers, though bodies of water, have a different quality; something that lakes lack: rivers constantly move. If a river stops moving, something is wrong... Rivers are conduits carrying run-off and sediments from higher terrain to provide sustenance and nutrients down river to where they're needed. In many ways, discipleship should be more like a river than a lake.... God wants and needs for us to be rivers, not reservoirs holding onto that which he's provided.

That's where today's parable comes in. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> eschatological parable in this passage, a warning to be vigilant. But it has another level: we are managers of that which God has given. Problem is, some hear manager and think lake-discipleship; i.e., work hard at holding / maintaining; keep it where it's at; keep it polished, painted, and preferably, put away so others can't use it. Problem with churches: maintenance mentality...

If this parable declares anything, it declares that God is the owner of all and expects us to use what he's given. All that I have; all that we have, is a trust! It's not a loan; it's not ours; it is God's committed to our custody with the expectation of proper care and performance. (Use it or lose it!)

#### **1 God Gives Generously – It's God's to give**

- a) My obligation is to respond in faith – God wouldn't have given me this unless...
- b) Every decision is a spiritual decision. How do I use what I have?

#### **2 The Response of Creative Ingenuity**

There are two responses here: Creative ingenuity & Selfishness! The first and second stewards used their talents, yes! That's how most sermons preach on this. Use your talents. But there's something deeper here!

- a) They took high risk ventures... They were creative and clever!
- b) They took big risk because they knew their Master... They were rivers...

#### **3) The Tragedy of Lake Mentality - Selfishness**

The third manager was selfish; he was a lake and held on to his talent.

- a) The text doesn't say why? Maybe he was miffed... Maybe he was more focused on himself... Ultimately, he forgot about it and allowed it to sit...
- b) Wickedness prevailed. Wicked means allowing the twistedness of the world to affect you!!!
- c) Of the 3 he was the one who kept it, held it, didn't pass it on...

(5 Talents ~ \$7,200,000) (\$36,000,000)

(2 Talents ~ \$2,880,000) (\$5,760,000)

(1 Talent ~ \$1,440,000) (\$1,440,000)

Total investment ~ \$11,520,000! | Return on Investment ~ \$43,200,000



### Challenges We Must Meet to Grow

Some people think of Revelation as foreboding and obscure; a mystery wrapped in an enigma, set in a puzzle. It is not. It is a book of promise whose purpose is to encourage faith. The book of Revelation is encoded literature; apocalyptic literature comprised of symbols and language that represent veiled information. Its development happened in places where God's people were oppressed yet determined to share messages of hope and God's final judgment on the world. Contrary to the majority of the book, the letters to the churches found in the first three chapters aren't as symbolic, apocalyptic. They have a literal quality, mainly because they were written to historical churches in Asia Minor. Their meaning is straightforward:

Sardis: Every church goes through stages of growth and decline... Decline potentially is a pre-stage to renewal – revivification. Decline is also a time of warning. In these early chapters, Christ speaks directly to encourage believers not give in or give up; to demonstrate his direct knowledge and involvement with each church, knowing its particular strengths and challenges...

What's at stake here, in particular, is spiritual death. Make no mistake: churches can die and history proves it! Deadness is not about size or worship style. It's about connectedness; it's about sensitivity to God's Spirit, something we can call alignment. Dead people aren't in relationship with anyone! I still remember the time a few days after my father death. My mother and I went to the bank to deposit his checks and the bank informed my mother that since he had died, there was no longer a viable relationship between her and my father. She had to file the proper forms in able to receive her portion of his pension! Also, dead people don't sense the world around them! Spiritually dead churches no longer discern or follow the Holy Spirit. They are cut off, dead.

What causes death? 1) Living in the past: caught in the nostalgia of what once was; 2) failing to take the effects of sin seriously in the Body of Christ; 3) ignoring its own symptomology. That is, not taking notice of what's happening are dysfunctional. There is reprieve, however. "Wake up!" In other words: Urgent Emergency! Take notice!

Jesus calls for Proof of life: We call it the Seven-Fold nature of the Spirit. It should be present in every church that is alive. (Is. 11:2-5) Ironically, for a church to grow it must face and overcome challenges...

#### 1. Suffering & Hassles

Spiritual attacks...

A) Response is key: Don't be silenced by problems...

B) Respond by worship and rejoicing – James 1:2, 3

#### 2. Faith Illiteracy:

Problem today isn't so much erroneous information as Christian illiteracy...

People mix theology with conjecture...

A) Know God's word for yourself -

B) Beware of falsity -

#### 3. Religious Arrogance

Sometimes the church is overly critical of what we call "worldliness". There are many things outside the Christian community that we need to learn from!

A) The need for transformation - God transforms us...

B) Make ourselves available for transformation.

#### 4. Indifference

This is lack of interest. It is possible to lose interest in God, and the things of God, if you allow negative influences in your life.

A Prayer of Change  
1 Chronicles 4:9-10

Chronicles is an assessment for Israel had been and help informed who they were, shaping and giving form to their identity.

Its early chapters are really a genealogy. Something different happens here in chapter 4 verse 9. Rather than continue to highlight the family tree, the author pauses to comment on a distinguished individual. His name is a play on the Hebrew word for pain or painful. We know of him as Jabez.

Naming children, in antiquity was sacred practice. It was believed that one's name not only became one's moniker but also as a destiny maker. A person's essence was conveyed by the meaning of his name. Jesus, for example signifies YHWH saves. Saul symbolizes the one who was asked for. Paul means the little one; Daniel conveys the idea that God is my judge; and Mary's name means loved by the Lord. Parent's typically thought long and hard about a name because their child bore than name and essence for the rest of their lives. So, for Jabez's mother to make such a significant play was meant to tell a story to the world: This child created enormous pain for me; his journey into this life caused sorrow for me. When others called his name it would serve as a warning: here comes the pain-maker.

Maybe that's why Jabez distinguished himself from his brothers; he had something to outlive and something to prove. His life was not predetermined. What is past is past. He would not be constrained or circumscribed by another's opinion or experience, even if that person was his mother! Here, is the message for us individually and congregationally. What others have said does not determine who we are today or in the future.

Though scripture does not say how Jabez distinguished himself, it does share this: Jabez prayed.

His was an ingeniously selfish prayer with enormous selfless benefits: "*Lord, bless me, enlarge my territory, stand by me, and make me not suffer...*" This is not rugged individualism; this is not about realizing personal goals. This is a prayer of change:

1. **Bless me** – I cannot be of use to God or others if God don't plow the ground; till the soil; plant the seeds of grace; and grow Spiritual fruit that bespeaks praise. God must affect my essence and transform me.
2. **Enlarge me territory** – So selfish sounding, isn't it? It's not. It's a phrase of change. God can't use me if things remain the same. Enlargement is to stretch which hurts as it happens. But when you look back, one sees what God had accomplished in stretching us – and moving us from comfort zones.
3. **Stand by me** – Again, it sounds selfish. This is quite proactive. God will stand by us as we align ourselves in His will. People often want the benefits of blessing with the commitment to live holy.
4. **Make me not suffer.** This is the problematic part that, interestingly, is linked to "bless me." Other versions say, "keep me," or "be with me." Hebrew says, "make me not suffer." Why would God do that after doing all the great stuff before?? Is God some kind of psychotic, capricious, fickle God? No! Look at it this way: Lord, misfortune happens! Use me to bring good out of the bad!

Luke 3:1-16  
Preparing for Change

Each year stores and malls prepare for Christmas sooner than the year before... There's so much to do but so little time. And that's where it begins: planning menus; parties; Christmas lists of all kinds; trees; decorations; lights and don't forget the ugly sweaters! Advent generates a spirit of excited expectation exemplified by Santa's arrival with gifts. Advent calls us to prepare. Advent is a sign.

John the Baptist was a sign, a human sign. His message was one of repentance. People asked, 'What must we do?' Be ethical; be fair even if it cost you! The heart of the message of Christmas is not one of convenience but of cost. It's about faithfulness, not our faithfulness to God but God's faithfulness to us!!! This year Advent reminds us to prepare:

### **1. Change our Comfort Zone**

We like our comfort zones. John the Baptist's comfort zone seemed mighty narrow, wearing camel hair and eating insects. But think about Joseph and Mary. Didn't it cost them something to prepare for their first child? It cost them the comforts of home; it could have cost Mary her reputation. It cost the wise men years of travel (Physical change). They gave expensive gifts but they left with changed lives! It also cost God something!

### **2. Change your life!**

Metanoia! Head in the opposite direction! Repentance happens every day. It's conscientious. It doesn't just happen; you have to yield; and as you yield, God reveals! God inspires you and draws you towards Him! God invites you to give Him all that's holds you back; all that drains you; derails you; prevails against you. And in exchange he transforms you; delivers you; heals you.

a) Fruit of Spirit grows ~ love; joy; peace; patience; kindness; goodness; faithfulness; gentleness; self-control, which leads to:

b) "Producing spiritual fruit! Care (for another); Share (with another); Bear (Carry another)!"

### **3. Change of Focus**

John the Baptist understood that his main role was not to draw attention to himself. He directed people to the Son of God. Put another way: what we do is not about ourselves; it is about God! Here's an illustration:

A woman told about the play their church put on one year. She said: My young daughter, Jana, was so excited about her part that I thought she was to be one of the main characters but she would never tell what part she played... "You did?" I questioned, wondering why she thought that. "Yes," she said, "cause I showed everybody how to find Jesus!"

Illustration taken from SermonCentral.com.

**APPENDIX E**  
**BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL**

# United States Air Force Chaplain (Ret)

## BIOGRAPHY

### CHAPLAIN JOSEPH R. ANDERSON

Minister Joseph R. Anderson is a Life-Coach counselor, motivational speaker/preacher, Saxophonist and USAF Instructor attends Alfred St Baptist Church in Alexandria Va. He has been an Air Force Pastor for 20 yrs and has preached and ministered all over the world. He was ordained to the ministry on 23 August 89 with the Church of God in Christ, in Los Angeles California by Bishop Charles E. Blake. In New England, Chaplain Anderson served at the Good Shepherd Church of God in Christ as an Associate Pastor. He also served as an Associate Pastor in Massachusetts Avenue Baptist Church. During this period chaplain Anderson also served as Clinical Coordinator for the 735 House treatment facilities. He was commissioned as a chaplain on 2 February 91 and has served as an Air National Guard Chaplain, for the 253 Combat Communications Group Wellesley ANG Station, Wellesley Massachusetts.

#### EDUCATION:

Bachelor of Science (Ministerial) Bethany Bible College, Santa Cruz, California  
Master of Divinity, (Counseling emphasis) Andover Newton Theological  
Seminary, Newton Centre, Massachusetts  
Squadron Officers School in Residence

#### ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Jul 89 -- Feb 90 Reserve Commissioning Dec 88, Chaplain Candidate Program
2. Sep 91-- May 93 Protestant Chaplain, Wellesley (ANG) Station Massachusetts
3. May 93 -- May 96 Protestant Chaplain, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma
4. Jun 96 -- Jun 98 Protestant Chaplain, Andersen AFB, Guam
5. Jul 98 -- Jan 01 Protestant Chaplain, Minot AFB, North Dakota
6. Feb 01 -- Jun 03 Protestant Chaplain, Nellis AFB, Nevada
7. Jul 03 -- Jun 06 Senior Protestant Chaplain, Dover AFB, Delaware
8. Jun 06 -- July 07 Installation Chaplain, Izmir, Turkey
9. July 07 -- Sep 08 Senior Protestant Chaplain, Edwards AFB, CA
10. Sep 08 -- present Preacher/Life-Coach, Musician and USAF Instructor for the Prince George County School system, College Park, MD

**DEPLOYMENTS:**

Jan 17 – Jun 3, 99 Saudi Arabia, Prince Sultan Air Base  
Jun 27 – Sep 30, 02 Oman, Seeb Air Base  
July 30 – Aug 30, 02 UAE, United Arab Emirates, Al Dhafra Air Base  
Aug 11 – Nov 11, 05 Qatar, Qatar Air Base

**REMOTE:**

June 06 – July 07 Izmir, Turkey

**MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:**

Meritorious Service Medal 3 oak leaf cluster  
Air Force Commendation Medal with 2 oak leaf clusters  
Air Force Achievement Medal with 1 oak leaf cluster  
Joint Meritorious unit Award  
Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with 2 devices  
Air Force Organizational Excellence  
Air Force Good Conduct Medal  
National Defense Service Medal  
Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal  
Humanitarian Service Medal with 2 oak leaf clusters  
Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon  
NCO PME Graduate Ribbon  
Air Force Training Ribbon 1 oak leaf cluster

**EFFECTIVE DATE OF PROMOTION:**

Captain 1 Apr 93  
Major 1 Apr 02  
(Current as of Jan 1, 2013)

**MICHAEL J. COX**  
**314 Upper Mountain Avenue**  
**Montclair, NJ 07043**  
**(973) 873-8211**  
**michaelmjcox@comcast.net**

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**PROFILE:**

Highly skilled, committed professional with more than 25 years of experience facilitating growth and development in faith based organizations and non profits. Strong visionary leader, with a proven ability to work creatively and collaboratively with a wide variety of audiences in leading change and developing effective strategies. A resourceful team player with proven capacity to balance multiple priorities. Areas of expertise include:

Vision Casting	Project Management
Creative Thinking	Public Speaking
Resource Development	Organizational Development

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**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

**United Negro College Fund, Newark, New Jersey, 2011-present:**

*Area Development Director*—Lead in conducting comprehensive, cost-effective annual capital, fund-raising campaigns within assign markets from various sources. Planning and implementing campaign strategies consistent with UNCF national action plans and policies.

**St. Paul Baptist Church, Montclair, New Jersey, 2005-2010:**

*Senior Pastor* -- Led congregation with 300 active members to numerical growth of over 1100 members in following the vision of worship, service, evangelism, growth and fellowship. Increased total receipts from \$850,000 to over \$1.2 million during most difficult economic time in U.S. history. Facilitated increase in giving to outside causes by fifty percent. Lead over 400 people to participate in community transformation activities on one Sunday. Developed and implemented long term strategy and commitment to youth survivors of Hurricane Katrina leading to increased school attendance, literacy and health. Led church to develop ministry to both victims and perpetrators of domestic violence.

**Leadership Network, Dallas, Texas, 2004-2005**

*Leadership Community Director* – Helped megachurches set bold goals and strategies in serving people in their community and thereby increase their impact in the community. These efforts led to church collaborations with local schools, hospitals, police and local governments.

**Michael J. Cox**

**Page 2**

**National Ministries, American Baptist Churches USA, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania 1998-2005:**

*National Coordinator for New Church Planting* -- Worked closely with national, regional and local church leaders to cast the vision of new church planting, evangelism and congregational transformation, in designing strategic plans, and developing leaders who seek to reach their communities with the Good News of Jesus Christ in the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

**Brentwood Baptist Church, Houston, Texas, 1997-2005, 1981-1982:**

*Associate Minister* -- Responsible to the pastor for preaching assignments, leading bible studies, and other duties. Major focus was youth and single's ministries.

*Minister of Youth and Activities* -- Responsible to the pastor for developing youth and children's ministries and church recreational program. Gave assistance in conducting worship services, pastoral care and preaching duties. Church membership increased from 800 to 2,500 during tenure. Youth and children's ministries increased from 100 to 350 during this time.

**Union Baptist Association, Houston, Texas, 1997-1998:**

*Senior Church Consultant* -- Provided consultations to megachurch pastors and congregations to facilitate the development and implementation of their visions. Coordinated the program of lay leadership development for the five hundred churches in the association.

**Home Mission Board, Southern Baptists Convention, Atlanta, Georgia, 1988-1997:**

*Associate Director Office of Mega City Missions* -- Related to the Baptist associations in the fifty most populated cities in the United States for strategic planning and the placement and training of associational missionaries. Coordinated relationship with six state conventions and the Associational Missions Division.

*Associate Director Black Church Extension Division* -- Related to ten state conventions in assisting them in developing strategies for church planting and church growth in predominately black communities. This included coordinating budgets; recruiting, training, and supervising church planters and strategists; planning and giving leadership at regional and national conferences as assigned.

**Christian Fellowship Baptist Church, Riverdale, Georgia 1991-1997:**

*Associate Pastor* -- Facilitated the planting of this new church and was responsible to the pastor for providing leadership, preaching, conducting worship services, assistance in Christian Education and pastoral care as needed.

**Faith Community Baptist Church, Euclid, Ohio, 1984-1988:**

*Pastor* -- Led bible study group of six into a church of 300. As pastor, responsible for several tasks that included teaching bible study, pastoral care, counseling and conducting worship services.

**State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, Columbus, Ohio, 1986-1988:**

*Black Church Relations Consultant* -- Responsible to State Missions Director for coordinating work with predominately black congregations. This included the formation of a black pastors' fellowship, a statewide black church training conference and giving assistance to all associations in the state in the area of black church relations.

**Bethsaida Baptist Church, Chicago, Illinois, 1979-1981:**

*Associate Pastor* -- Responsible to the pastor for conducting worship services, assistance in Christian Education and pastoral care as needed.



Michael J. Cox  
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Central Seminary, Kansas City, Kansas, 2003

American Baptist Seminary of the West, Berkeley, California, 2002

Southern Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, 1990

Boyce Bible College, Willoughby, Ohio, 1985-1987:

*Adjunct Professor* -- Developed curriculum and taught courses on church planting, congregational transformation and church administration to students preparing for ministry careers.

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#### EDUCATION:

<b>Graduate:</b>	Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey Currently a Doctor of Ministry student on leave of absence Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas Master of Arts, Religious Education, 1983
<b>Undergraduate:</b>	Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia Bachelor of Arts, Political Science, 1979 cum laude
<b>Parish Consultant:</b>	Yokefellow Institute, Richmond, Indiana Certification, 1991

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#### ACHIEVEMENTS, HONORS AND AWARDS:

- Do Right Man of the Year, Essence magazine, 2007
- Religion Award, Montclair Branch of the NAACP, 2006
- Co-Author of "Church Planting in the African-American Community," first edition 1993, revised 2002
- Worship Leader, Home Missions Week, Jericho Missions Festival, 1992
- John B. Falconer Lecturer, Monrovia, Liberia, 1991
- *The Reverend Michael Cox Day*, Euclid, Ohio, August 6, 1988
- National Baptist Student Fellowship Vice-President, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1982
- Outstanding Young Men of America, 1980
- Chicago Morehouse College Alumni Club Scholarship, 1977
- Sophomore Class Vice-President - Morehouse College, 1976

#### RELIGIOUS/ CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS:

- Morehouse College Alumni Association
- Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated
- Advisory Board Member, HomeCorp 2008-2010
- Board Member, Mountainside Hospital 2009-2010
- President Montclair Clergy Association 2009-2010

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

## **WESLEY ANTHONY ROSE**

547 45<sup>th</sup> Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11220 (718) 541-1748 wesleyrose@gmail.com

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### **Professional Summary**

- A non-profit professional with ten years of experience in management and organization.
- Experienced case-worker and counselor to the underprivileged.
- Effective teacher with experience serving diverse people groups, especially youth and men.
- Trusted consultant capable of identifying and solving complex problems in a resourceful manner.
- Strong negotiation and public relations skills.
- Decision-making abilities and effective communication skills.

### **Faith-Based Leadership**

#### **The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Brooklyn, NY**

Consultant/Teacher/Pulpit filler/Church Council Board Member/Property Committee - 2008-Present

#### **The Village Church, Greenwich Village, NY**

Teaching Elder/Family Counselor - 1995-2005

Case load coordinator for professional counseling ministry, deaconate coordinator, consultant to: fund-raising committee, building committee, home fellowship groups, youth ministry, treasury.

### **Public Policy Advocacy**

#### **Brooklyn Congregations United, Brooklyn, NY**

Volunteer 2008 - Present

Advocate for immigration and health care reforms by mobilizing local communities.

#### **The Sanctuary Movement, Brooklyn, NY**

Volunteer 2008 - Present

Facilitator of mentoring workshops serving immigrants at various stages of deportation.

#### **Acorn, New York, NY**

Volunteer, Advocate - 1985

### **Faith-Based Community Service**

#### **Southern Exposure, Greenwich Village, NY**

Board Member - 1997-1999

Consultant for start-up disaster relief organization building low-income and emergency housing for victims of earthquake in Haiti.

**Hope for New York**, New York, NY

Consultant - 1992-1999

Consultant to mercy organization serving the underprivileged of the city.

**The Bailey House**, New York, NY

Volunteer Teacher/Preacher - 2010-Present

Active volunteer to AIDS residence.

**Bowery Mission**, New York, NY

Volunteer - 1989-1991

Counselor to residents on various life skills for rehabilitation and reintegration into work force. Areas included: unemployment, domestic violence, criminal justice, mental illness, substance abuse, homelessness and AIDS.

**Social Services**

**St Vincent's Services**, New York, NY

Counselor, 2003-2004

Case Worker/Counselor for a city foster agency that supports parents of children in care. Casework resulted in improved service delivery to children in care, foster parents as well as the launch of monthly workshops for Foster parents. Carried out extensive research for African Americans with bi-polar disorders. Findings presented to NY State for funding considerations and implementation of new programs.

**Healthcare**

**Victory Memorial Hospital**, Brooklyn, NY

Health Care Assistant: 1994-1998

Commended consistently in performance reviews for initiative, dependability and sensitivity in patient care. Prepared and wrote an analysis of management and motivation in a hospital setting. Coordinated and monitored 20 patients as hospital floor coordinator.

**Renovation**

**Restoration Consultants**, New York, NY

Project Manager/Contractor: 2008-Present

Managed all phases of renovation and restoration of old buildings, including asbestos testing and reporting for New York City Department of Buildings.

**Education**

**Westminster Theological Seminary/City Seminary of NYC**

Master of Arts: Missions and Ministry in New York City: May, 2007  
Minor: Theology.

**Nyack College**

Bachelor of Science: Organizational Management: June, 1998

**Israeli Institute, Jordan Valley, Israel**

Cultural Exchange Program: 1988-1990

*Coursework included: Politics, history and languages of the region, Intern teacher at Israeli High School.*

**Karama Organization, Deheishe Refugee Camp, Occupied Territories, West Bank**

Humanitarian Field Work: Summer 2010

*Work included: Teaching, fundraising, fact finding.*

**Activities**

Participated in successful political campaign for Congressman Joseph Montelto (D).

Volunteered for ACORN as an advocate for low-income tenants.

Advocate for Seeds for Africa developing young leaders in Africa.

Travelled to Senegal and Cape Town with City Seminary for fieldwork in racial reconciliation and economic development.

Active faith-leader at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Brooklyn, New York.

**Awards**

Awarded the Helen America Memorial Award for outstanding humanitarian achievement.

**APPENDIX F**  
**TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP QUALITIES**

## **Transformative Leadership Qualities**

**Practices and Strategies to Internalize and Emulate**

# **The Five Practices And Ten Commandments of Exemplary Leadership**

**James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner**

## **Practices & 10 Commandments**

### ***Model the Way***

- 1) Clarify values by finding your voice and affirming shared values
- 2) Set the example by aligning actions with shared values

### ***Inspire a Shared Vision***

- 3) Envision the future by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities
- 4) Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations

### ***Challenge the Process***

- 5) Search for opportunities by seizing the initiative and by looking outward for innovative ways to improve
- 6) Experiment and take risks by constantly generating small wins and learning from experience

### ***Enable Others to Act***

- 7) Foster collaboration by building trust and facilitating relationships
- 8) Strengthen others by increasing self-determination and developing competence

### ***Encourage the Heart***

- 9) Recognize contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence
- 10) Celebrate the values and victories by creating a spirit of community

“This is a Personal-Best Leadership Project, so you’re setting out to perform at your highest levels...challenge is the opportunity for greatness (Kouzes, p. 26).”

“Excellence in anything – whether it’s leadership, music, sports, or engineering – requires disciplined practice (Kouzes, p. 14).”

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## **The Practice of Adaptive Leadership**

### **Noteworthy Leadership Traits & Strategies**

“Your purposes provide the inspiration and the direction for your actions. Next, we describe five practices to keep your purposes alive as you lead adaptive change (Heifetz, p. 232).”

#### ***Stay Connected to Your Purposes***

- “In what new ways of thinking and acting are you willing to engage on behalf of what you believe most deeply.”

#### ***Engage Courageously***

- 1) Watch for Gaps Between Your Words and Actions
- 2) Stay in the Present
- 3) Identify Loyalties You Need to Refashion
- 4) Conduct Needed Conversations
- 5) Create Rituals

#### ***Inspire People***

“Adaptive challenges involve values, not simply facts or logic...What we mean is how well you speak to others’ viewpoints, values, and needs.”

#### ***Run Experiments***

“Everything you do in adaptive change is an experiment...Framing everything as an experiment offers you more running room to try new strategies, to ask questions, to discover what’s essential, what’s expendable, and what innovation can work.”

#### ***Thrive***

“Take care of yourself rather than work to exhaustion.”

Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky, 2009



## **Switch: How to Change things When Change is Hard**

“For things to change, someone somewhere has to start acting differently. Maybe it’s you, maybe it’s your team.”

“Each has an emotional Elephant side and a rational Rider side. You’ve got to reach both. And you’ve also got to clear the way for them to succeed. In short, you must do three things:

➤ **DIRECT the Rider**

Follow the Bright Spots – clone what works

Script Critical Moves – Think in terms of specific behaviors, not big moves

Point to the Destination – Where you’re going & Why

➤ **MOTIVATE the Elephant**

Find the Feeling – Make people feel something

Shrink the Change – Accomplish smaller components of a large effort

Grow Your People – Cultivate a sense of identity

➤ **SHAPE the Path**

Tweak the Environment – Change the situation

Build Habits – Look for ways to encourage habits

Rally the Herd – Behavior is Contagious

Chip and Dan Heath, 2010

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